the PARIS REVIEW

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GRAHAM GREENE
an interview

George Barker

Donald Windham

Pati Hill

E. S. Connell Jr.

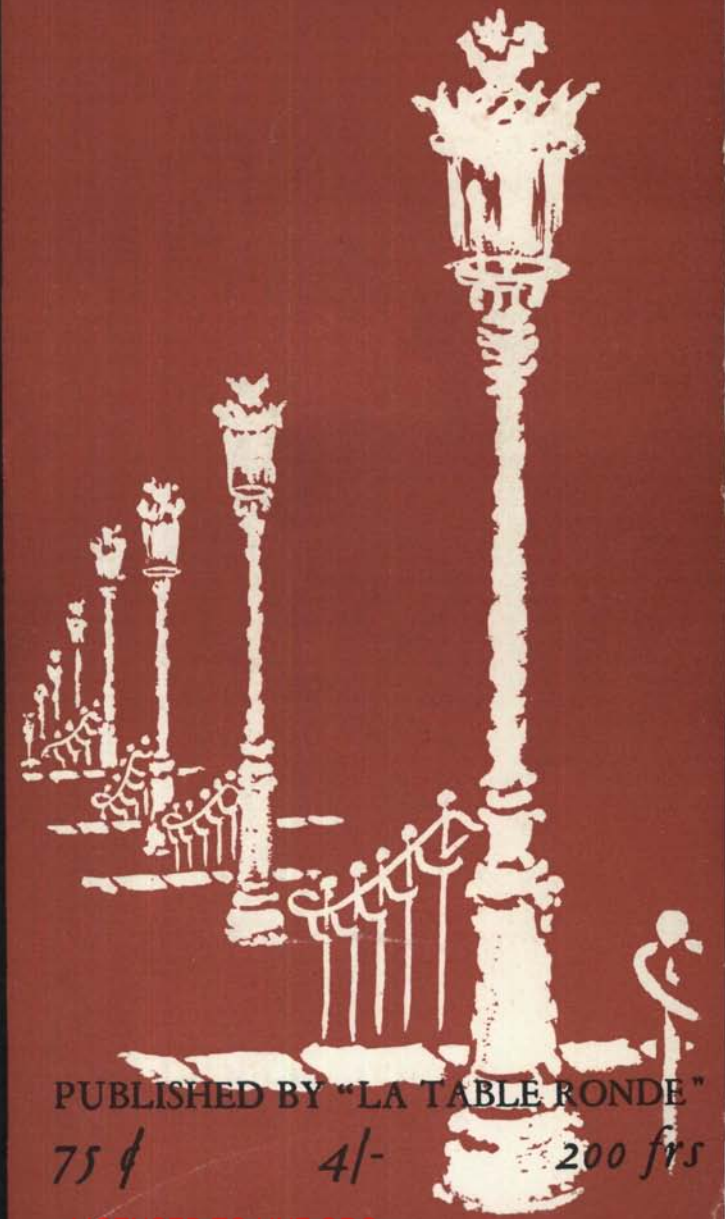
ten drawings by
CARZOU

Short Stories

Poetry

Commentaries

AUTUMN
1953



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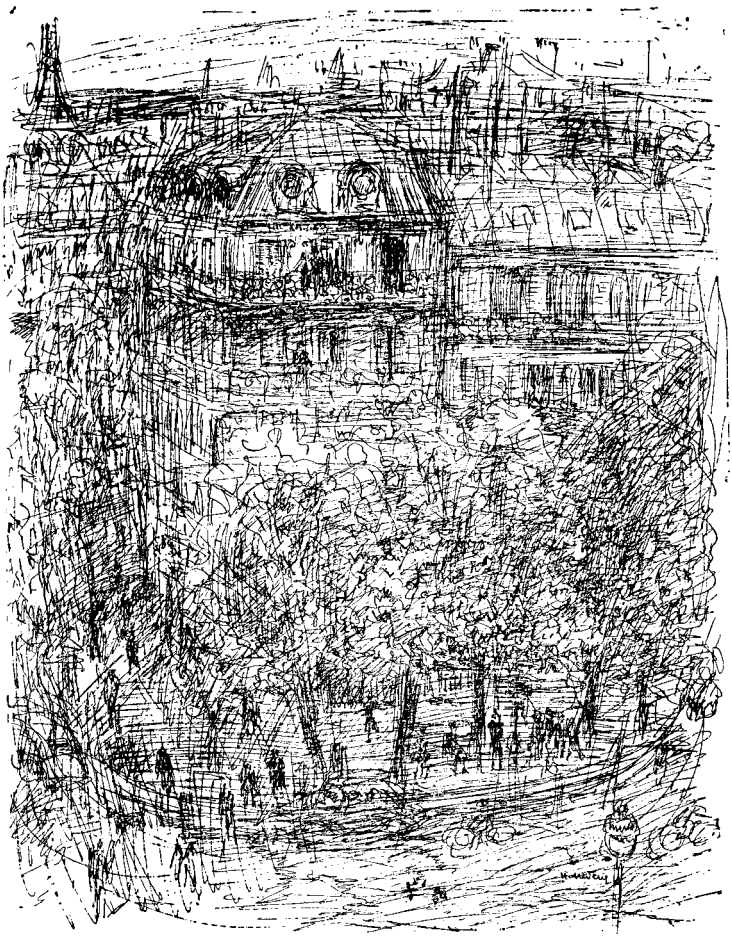

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THE PARIS REVIEW

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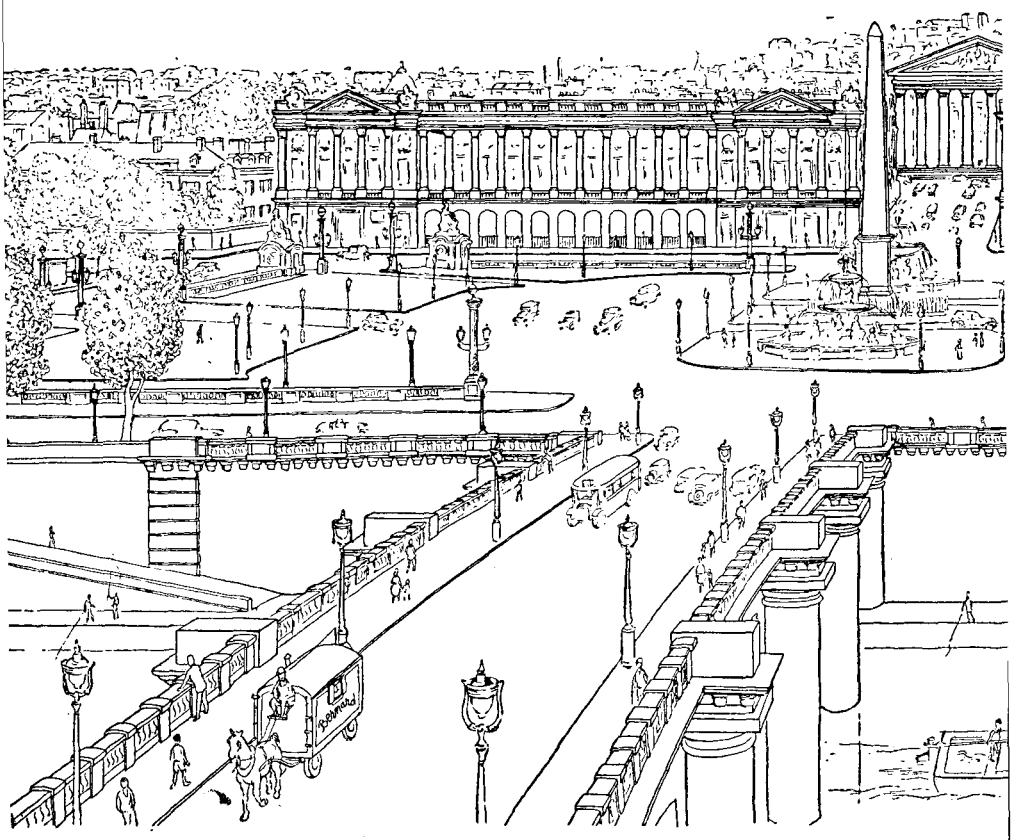

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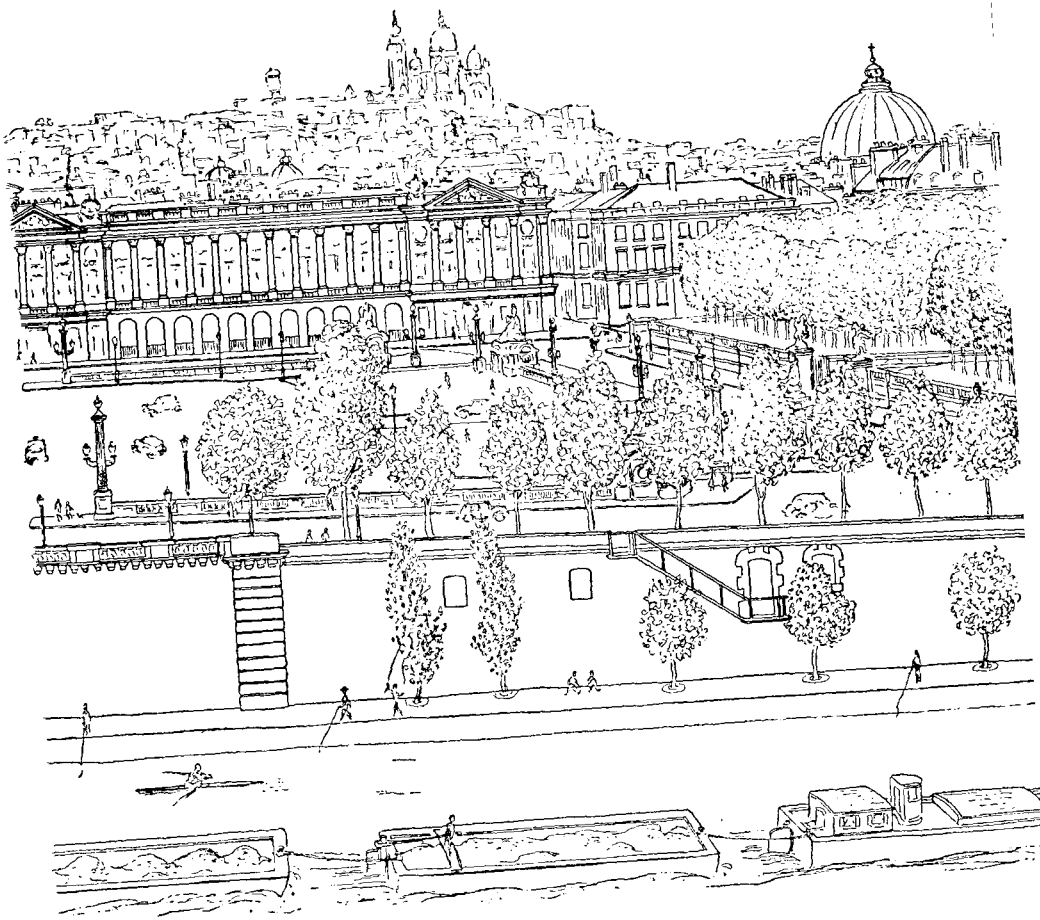

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EVAN S. CONNELL JR

COCOA PARTY

DURING the eleven years that Andrev Andraukov and Dr. Karl Locke worked together they evolved a curious manner of conversation, curious first of all because it was invariably opened and closed by the professor, and second because of its disconnected character. Their dialogue might be likened to an underground river which rushes unexpectedly into the sunlight and as suddenly disappears.

The day before the beginning of one Christmas vacation, for example, Dr. Locke bought a tin of cocoa and two boxes of *petits fours* and rented a phonograph with some records. Then he typed on one of his file cards and thumbtacked to the bulletin board an invitation for all students with marks of C or better to attend a party in the office when they finished class. Not many students accepted the invitation. He sat in his swivel chair behind the desk, his lips counting the young people as they entered, and there was absolutely no expression on his face.

The party such as it was had not been long in progress when everyone in the office heard Andraukov approaching: the squeak of his shoes and the rhythm of his walk were unmistakable. One step came after another as surely as a night comes after a day. Dr. Locke's mouth twitched; he re-crossed his slender legs, arranging the trousers so as not to destroy the crease or result in a bulge at the knee, then with one hand he shaded his eyes against the brilliant winter sunlight reflected through the windows.

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On the phonograph *The Blue Danube* had just begun; to its melody a supple crafty-looking boy named Francis Rheba murmured, "Vich zhoe vill it be doday? Vich zhoe vill it be doday?" This was an allusion to the fact that Andraukov owned three shoes, two lefts and a right, the second right having been lost somewhere in the banks of material that jammed his studio. Both pairs had been identical, indeed everything he bought was as nearly as possible like the thing it was replacing. The shoes were ankle-high, black, even longer than necessary for his extremely large feet, and they were of the cheapest quality. The soles all but vanished every four or five months, at which time he would gravely and unquestioningly buy another pair. He did not seem to realize that shoes could be half-soled, at least he never entered a repair shop; it was as if when a thing gave way it was gone forever and nothing could bring it back. His two left shoes could be distinguished now because the toe of one was spattered with sienna paint while the other was scratched and stained with some kind of glue he had once been inventing. Both, though severely worn, could not compare with the state of the remaining right shoe which had a heel as round as a thumb and so many knots amongst the hooks that it could not afford a bow.

In the corridor the footsteps came to a stop. These sudden halts of the old man were a source of infinite amusement to every class of art students and through the years there had grown up a tradition that they were always to be timed. Seniors could speak of the famous day when he had stopped in the midst of a monologue on the importance of mixing paints properly and had stood before them without moving for almost eleven minutes—stood there still, withered, leaning like a cornstalk in some abandoned field. But on this occasion the pause was brief; the steps resumed and a moment later Mr. Andraukov passed the doorway. Few of the students took time to glance at his shoes, they were absorbed by the haggard face.

"Eev you do nod vadz, nod vadz, nod vadz," Francis Rheba murmured, and then gave off attempting to match

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the melody, "how you vill learn do draw? Zo?" His imitation of the accent was perfect except that he could not lower it to the proper rumbling bass. "Vaz de pendted zhoe."

"But doesn't Mr. Andraukov know we're in here?" inquired one of the freshmen.

"They talk about still waters," another student whispered, "but if you ask me the old boy's more asleep than deep."

Someone said out loud that Andraukov had lemon juice for blood. This brought an instant of silence to see if punishment would follow but there was no movement behind the desk, the wan and weary face almost concealed by a pale hand seemed to be taking no notice of them.

"Mr. Andraukov reminds me of an undertaker with jaundice." The voice was insolent; the 'Mr.' a safeguard in case Dr. Locke should stop daydreaming. Another Strauss plopped onto the turntable. The cups clinked softly. The eyes of the students were bright with the promise of Christmas.

"I say that man belongs in a tintype."

"Who wears a stickpin in this age?"

"Mr. Andrev Andraukov of Fischer College."

"Who wears a hardboiled collar?"

"Mr. Andrev Andraukov."

"I say he's got feelings from A to C."

There was one student, sitting by himself in a corner, who did not join the game. He was an ugly and rather stooped boy with a face as pinched and stormy as a captured bat and his name was Logan Zahn. His hair was stiff and black but his eyebrows were shot through with bristles of deep red. He sometimes drew savage little caricatures of his classmates when they were not looking, and in addition there were rumors that he was writing a book about something; in consequence he was looked upon with hostility. He had twice been challenged to a fistfight, though nobody could remember for what reason.

Dr. Locke spoke. He had a nasal tenor voice and faultless diction. "One of you may invite Mr. Andraukov to join us." As several students moved toward the door he swung about in his swivel chair and lowered two elegant index fingers

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like white pistol barrels at Logan Zahn. Having watched Zahn leave the room he placed his elbows carefully on the armrests of his chair and tapped his fingertips together. "Would you care for some more cocoa, Mr. Triggs?"

"No, thank you," the big fellow answered. His mouth worked before he could emit the words. "This is my second cu-cup already."

"Yes. Of course. A third cup might destroy the accuracy of your pitching arm. Alas for the alma mater. Why do you flush, Mr. Triggs? Miss Jefferson, cocoa?"

She swallowed what remained in her cup and held it out for more. As he poured he asked after the health of her brother who had fallen off a motorcycle, and she said he was much better.

"Fine. Please extend my hopes for the rapid knitting of his leg. Now, Mr. Pocock, you? Yes, indeed, eh? And how is the British cocoa?"

"Afraid I'm prejudiced, sir," replied Arnold Pocock bravely, though softening his answer by a brilliant smile through his beard.

"I," Dr. Locke said, "have been in London. And in Liverpool, for which I did not greatly care." He paid no attention to Pocock's acknowledgment but swiveled in the direction of the door, cocoa pot still in hand, lifted his voice a decible and suggested, "Come in, Mr. Andraukov?"

The instructor, who had been standing in the corridor, lowered his head so as not to hit the arch and then walked into the office.

"As you see we are having a slight celebration in honor of the imminent holidays."

The students were quiet, staring up at Andraukov.

Locke pointed to the cookies and to the phonograph. "We would be delighted to have you join us." He motioned one of the boys to fetch a chair; Andraukov felt for its seat and then sat down and folded his hands in his lap. A saliva-soaked cigarette wrapped in brown paper jutted through the long dirty hairs of his mustache; its fire had gone out but nearly an inch of ash striated and thick like cigar ash clung

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to its tip. His eyes, sunken so far in their sockets that they were scarcely visible, were fixed on something below the floorboards.

Pocock who was standing beside the phonograph suddenly looked at it and asked if that was not Katherine Tegtmeyer on the violin; Locke glanced up surprised and pleased and said that indeed it was.

"We almost consider her one of ours, you know. Poor girl. She used to be right good."

The professor set his cup very deliberately back into the saucer. He made a steeple of his fingers and peered over the top, saying, "And still is, young man. Not, 'right good' but the best. The very best there is."

Pocock thought this a matter of opinion but after a look at the peculiar rigidity forming on Locke's face he did not elaborate. Both of them listened to the music for a little while, then the professor said more genially, "So you like Katherine's playing, do you? Then I shall see to it that you meet her."

"I beg your pardon?"

"Surely you have seen the posters announcing her Andromeda concert, Mr. Pocock. Yes. Of course. We discussed them as works of art just a few days ago. Well, sir, she and I were schoolmates long years ago. Alas, how many years."

"You and Tegtmeyer?"

"We attended conservatory together."

"Not meaning any disrespect but—music conservatory? You?"

"Does that strike you as so utterly strange, young man?" The professor snapped a cookie between his fingers and ate half of it before continuing, "For three long years I was under the impression that Destiny was motioning me toward a piano stool. How ludicrous it all seems to me now." He ate the rest of the cookie and smiled on all the students, most of whom smiled back.

The conversation which had lapsed while he was speaking now started up again and the new topic was Katherine Tegtmeyer. Who is she?... plays what?... the Continent how many

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years?... terribly homely... a lesbian... a nymph?... for the King... a *real* Stradivarius?...

Dr. Locke, pushing an ash tray across the desk toward Andraukov, asked if he was familiar with the music on the phonograph.

The instructor said he was not.

"Well, it's a delicate thing composed by Boccherini about 1795, if memory serves me well. It is one of Katherine's particular favorites."

Andraukov did not say anything.

After a few moments Locke picked up a half-carved block of soapstone which had been lying on his desk, and opening his pocket knife he resumed work on it. Two of the students came across to have a look and he held it up for inspection. "A water spout for my cathedral. A gargoyle, from the Old French word *gargouille*, meaning 'throat'. Do you like it?" They both found it very sophisticated. He listened to their compliments with a somewhat cynical expression and then continued: "The Gothic purity is most pleasing to me, most pleasing. It is, I feel, the true crown of the Romanesque. Its chief element, in case you youngsters are unfamiliar with the conception, is the ogival vaulting which came to be used in association with the famous, and deservedly so, pointed arches of the 12th century." As he spoke he had lowered his eyes; now he raised them.

All of the students were again staring at Andraukov.

"Let us consider the renovation of the Ely cathedral," he said, his voice pitched somewhat higher. "The great central tower, built by the first Norman abbot whose dates of office, if I remember, were 1082 to 1094, collapsed in the year 1321."

Several students looked politely in his direction.

He pursed his lips, for a few seconds held them in that position, then he blew away the tiny soapstone chips and dust. He knocked the gargoyle against his palm, settled himself more comfortably in the swivel chair. He looked at Andraukov's cup which was untouched and in the middle of which an island of brown skin was constantly contracting and relaxing. Neither had the man eaten any of the cookies

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which were arranged on the saucer.

"Can you tell me, by any chance, Mr. Andraukov, who ate what with a runcible spoon?" He had spoken so rapidly that even the students to whom English was native did not understand what he had said.

Several seconds of silence followed his question. Then Andraukov said something.

"I am sorry but you must speak up. I am unable to hear you."

There was another pause, then: "Please?"

"Surely you, in common with all foreigners, wish to learn our language as well as possible, therefore you may not take exception if I remind you that we say, 'I beg your pardon?' rather than 'Please?' In regard to my question, I asked if you could tell me who ate what with a runcible spoon. 'They dined on mince and slices of quince which they ate with a runcible spoon, and hand in hand on the edge of the sand they danced by the light of the moon.' " Dr. Locke puffed at the carving again.

Andraukov licked the underside of his streaked and drooping mustache.

"Yes," Locke continued. "They sailed away for a year and a day to the land where the bong-tree grows, and there in a wood a Piggy-wig stood with a ring at the end of his nose, his nose, with a ring at the end of his nose." Tell me, sir, what do you think of that?"

"Well, it is very nice."

"Do speak up, sir."

The old man repeated what he had said.

"Then you like that?"

He nodded gravely.

"Fine. Now can you tell me who it was?"

The faces of the students held something close to awe at the professor's temerity.

" 'Twas the owl and the pussycat," Locke said. "Yes, the owl and the pussycat."

Andraukov was gazing down at something far out of sight. His face seemed chiseled from ancient marble.

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The sun had by now changed its position, shining directly on the professor's large white head which was bald except for what looked almost like a crow's wing resting on each ear. His skin was so pale and transparent that the temple veins could be seen from clear across the room. He opened one of the desk drawers, took out a leatherette case from which he drew a pair of clip-on glasses, tinted dark green, and soberly attached them to his bifocals. "The tower collapsed in 1321, carrying with it portions of the adjoining bays of the nave, transept and choir. Instead of rebuilding the towers Alan of Walsingham conceived the idea of obtaining a much larger area in the center of the cathedral by taking as the base of his design a central octagonal space, the width of which..."

Andraukov was still seated the same way, like a child. Suddenly the ash of his cigarette bent, broke, scattered in grey flakes all down his vest.

Dr. Locke opened another desk drawer and brought out a file no larger than a toothpick with which he began to sharpen the gargoyle's teeth. "Some of the students have been inquiring as to the possibility of your opening a class in finger painting."

At this several surprised faces turned towards him.

"Would you be interested?" he asked as he picked and scraped inside the little green mouth. "It might be arranged. I should not have mentioned it, of course, but for the fact that a serious attitude now prevails in regard to this medium. The psychologists, so I am given to understand, are finding it relevant to patterns of behavior."

The odor of Andraukov had filled the room.

"I understand you have a phonograph in your studio upstairs. I understand, too, that you play certain records on your machine late at night when you think no one is around. What sort of music do you prefer, pray tell?"

After a while Andraukov answered. "It is the music of Yemen, I prefer. The plain-song. And Gregory. These are the music. Such is the music."

"I see. You play an instrument, I believe?"

Andraukov did not say anything.

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"Despite the declarative construction that was a question. What sort of an instrument do you play, sir?"

"It is the psaltery."

"Interesting. And what does one do to a psaltery?"

He did not understand.

"I say, does one blow through the instrument?"

"No."

"Continue."

"There are the strings to pluck."

"Yes. Yes, of course. And how does one pluck strings?" On Locke's wide, bulging forehead the veins were throbbing.

Andraukov held up one finger and plucked the air.

"Splendid. And what about a plectrum?"

He did not understand.

"You might employ one in lieu of your finger."

Andraukov, in his grave bass tones, answered. "I do not favor the plectrum."

Dr. Locke's eyes could not be seen behind the dark glasses, "Your vest is dappled with ashes."

"Please?"

Another record fell onto the turntable.

The party had become still more subdued; occasionally a student would approach the cookie platter with an apologetic expression but it was already evident that a substantial mound of the little delicacies would be left over. The students had formed a circle around Andraukov. Dr. Locke reached across his desk and snapped off the phonograph in the midst of a contralto aria: the woman howled and died away with a groan.

"Do you play the dulcimer?"

Andraukov said: "I do not favor the dulcimer."

Through the tinted glasses a movement could be seen, as if perhaps the professor had closed his eyes. His voice however, retained its cool stability. "Don't you believe in a well-rounded musical education?"

"No."

Locke placed his gargoyle on the desk. "Nevertheless it is possible that we have some records here you will enjoy."

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He hunted through the stack and replaced several numbers.

First there was a fox trot which was a popular favorite of the moment and which had been requested by the students several times during the afternoon. Next there were some rhumbas, tangos, and two more waltzes. Though the instructor's face did not change in the slightest it was clear that he did not like them. Dr. Locke added one more record. When this had ended he said, "Are you familiar with that piece, sir?"

"No."

Dr. Locke tapped one fist gently against his mouth while he cleared his throat, then he rocked back in the chair and as he spoke he swiveled from one side to the other in slow creaking arcs: "There is a certain poetic unity about you, Mr. Andraukov. What a pity it cannot communicate itself to others. As it is, you are only a type. Still, after a time we do become types, I suppose, sad parodies of all we have striven to be. With what desperate speed do we rush into our lives and later, bewildered, behold them recede rather like some wave, I suspect, which, not finding a rock whereon to gloriously shatter itself, only puckers its lip on the sand."

The older man did not say anything.

The professor picked up his warm cup, cradled it between his symmetrical hands. "That was the Boccherini again."

Apparently he had nothing further to say; little by little the students resumed their conversation while both the professor and his assistant sat in silence, the latter oblivious to everything, the former, despite the passivity of his features, seeming bitterly unhappy. Some time later he asked what Andraukov thought of Fischer's new president, adding, in case he had forgotten, that President Klein had died of a cerebral hemorrhage while on a fishing trip in the mountains and that a new man had been appointed, a man by the name of E. Brian Smallwood. "Prior to his appointment here this fellow was personnel psychologist at one of the largest meat packing concerns in the country. He is being referred to, so I understand, as our 'pork sausage' president. Do you have any opinion on that?"

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Andraukov had not.

Locke suggested that he would have before much longer because the faculty members had been invited to a barbecue at the president's home, something of a precedent to say the least, he added, smiling toward the students. Those who had heard the pun acknowledged it with a smile. He judged none of the faculty members would refuse the invitation if for no other reason than to affirm or negate the extraordinary rumor that an enormous vulture had recently been delivered to President Smallwood.

"It's true," Arnold Pocock said.

"Ah? So it does exist? I had thought it might be just a wild tale."

According to Pocock the huge bird sat in a little, drooping tree on the west side of the house and never made a move.

"It must be stuffed," the professor said, turning his head toward the instructor again, and with this remark the subject of President Smallwood's pet came to a close, at least officially.

The sun had dipped below the bluff and was slowly drawing its heatless rays across the ceiling when the professor spoke to his assistant again, saying, "I understand you are fond of herring." Several days previously Andraukov had bought two herring in a grocery in Andromeda, but while walking up a path to the school the parcel had fallen from his overcoat pocket and later Francis Rheba had carried the fish into the building and pinned them by their tails to the bulletin board.

"Herring," Andraukov said, "is good."

Locke's face appeared to be alternately draining and gorging with blood. He crossed his legs in the opposite direction. He shook up the trousers about his knees. "And where will you be spending your holidays, Mr. Andraukov? Not here, I should think. There is, as you know, a relapse of eighteen days, thanks to a fortunate coincidence of week-ends. For myself, I leave bright and early tomorrow morning. Nevertheless, each of us to his or her particular taste, eh?"

In the office no one spoke.

The professor had for some time been toying with his

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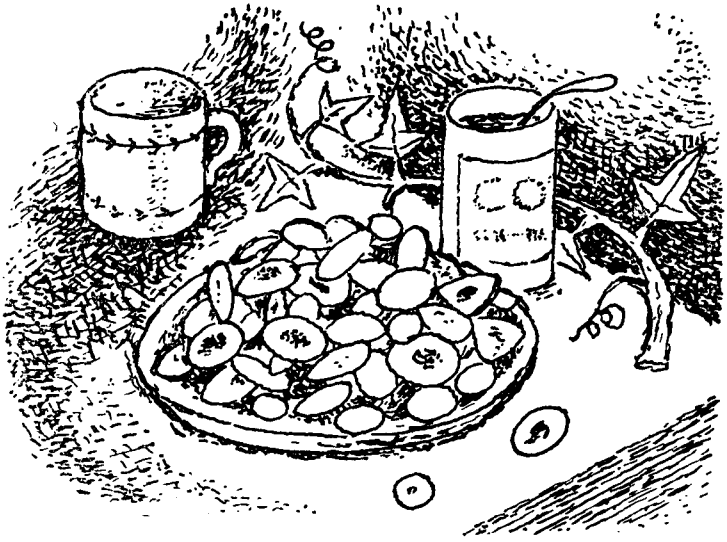
pocket knife. With a deft movement of one finger he snapped it shut and replaced it in the desk drawer. As the sun had completely disappeared he removed his clip-ons, slid them into their case, and placed this beside the knife. He closed the drawer and quietly stood up. With arms folded on his chest he walked past the loaded bookshelves that lined one entire wall and stopped at the far window where he stood for a time gazing out. The great Kaw valley lay tranquil in the winter twilight. Smoke was rising from the farmhouse chimneys. In one of the fields some men were chopping logs; the far faint sound of their axes came across the river on the curving wind. In a barnyard several children were struggling with a saddle and a bucking colt.

Dr. Locke swung about. His frosty eyes moved rapidly over the faces of his students as if seeking someone or something to criticise, but finding nothing he walked back to the desk where he finished his cocoa and replaced the cup with a click loud enough to command attention, a gesture quite unnecessary. There he stood, fingertips resting lightly on the glass top, his barren smile including everyone. He did not need to speak, all understood that he was wishing them a pleasant holiday and that the party was over.



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BROWNSTONE

City air makes a man free
To cut his own throat or that
Of his neighbor across the way.
Respect for this harmony
Throbs in the glances we meet

As we descend, falling from grace,
Along Eighty-second Street,
And the Genius of the place
Uncovers his careful face,
Remarking: "You are the elite

For whom Our Lord, it is said,
Swallowed vinegar and gall
While the thorn entered His head,
And raised Lazarus from the dead
For the human coronal.

And Moses fell upon his knees,
Ashamed and frightened to command,
Whom a Hand of Fire did seize
And burned such a cry of praise
Water echoed from the sand.

Then the air was perfectly whole,
And the desert rang with laughter
That would issue from the well;
The jackal and the staring foal
Drank with ease beside their master.

For gold and rare as daylight spun,
Laws came down in sage abandon
From the moon, from the sun,
Dropping seeds on everyone
From the heart of his companion.

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Law sublimed the monarch's rage
And chilled the tiger's splendid heart
That swirling blood could not assuage:
So they lived from age to age,
And no creature mourned apart.

Will you not assault the skies
With the fullness of your voice?
It was a joyous enterprise,
That crowned with love your fragile size:
Remembering this, you must rejoice."

"We are desolate, and weep.
In the one room the mind returns
Upon itself, whether in sleep
Or when restless fancies leap
Between the true and lying horns:

A rage against humanity
In the prison of the heart
Jangles to be wholly free
And argues in that guise the plea
Of a criminal upstart.

Who will shrive us with a law?
Our voices in the wind endure
The paradox of ice in thaw,
While our ribs betray a flaw
Under winter's chafing spur."

"Remember you are flesh and bone.
I am allied to mighty Baal,
And that race of watchful stone
That keep the desert gates alone
Where the lonely jackals prowl.

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On my harsh and grainèd visage
Saunter shades of such repose
As the moon can never ravage,
Or sharp fear, or Death the Savage
Break the air my thoughts enclose.

Wind and rain expend themselves
With endless patterns, endlessly,
Yet nothing of my thought dissolves.
I am that spirit which revolves
The Law throughout eternity.

When your fathers raised me up
I leaped beyond the highest tower
To drink from that immortal cup
Where sage and prophet, murmuring, drop
Wine of the articulate flower.

I learned the miracle of speech
That freemen harvest for their share,
And I will bend to you and teach
You words that quiver within reach:
You cannot breathe the highest air,

No, not if you press up with wings!
Or sealed in darkness, drive a swarm
Of dreams and fables, bloodless things
That a flaring taper wrings
Out of the night, out of the storm.

Your life is with your neighbor. Death
Waits for you with ruddy jaws
Agape, but you may front his wrath
With a temple built of breath
And quarried stone, the mince of laws."

—Robert Layzer

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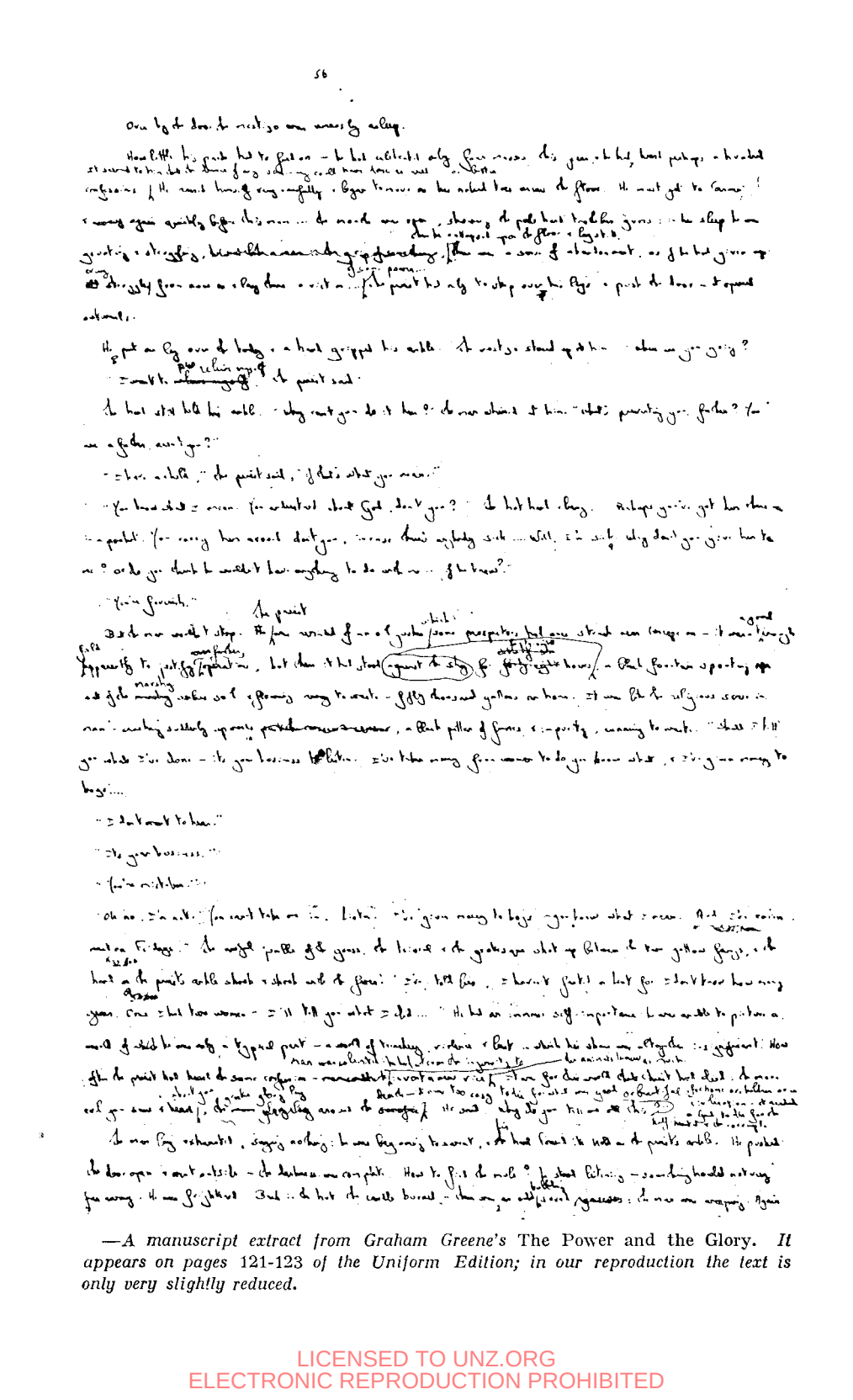

—*A manuscript extract from Graham Greene's* The Power and the Glory. *It appears on pages* 121-123 *of the Uniform Edition; in our reproduction the text is only very slightly reduced.*

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THE ART OF FICTION III

GRAHAM GREENE

In the interview held with Graham Greene in the spring of 1953, the author constantly reminded the interviewers that the key to his craft was to be found among the works themselves. Thus the following quotations are offered. They are removed from their contexts and occasionally the process has entailed a change of tense, person or article.

Every creative writer worth our consideration, every writer who can be called in the wide eighteenth century use of the term a poet, is a victim: a man given over to an obsession.

Gaugin's great phrase: "Life being what it is one dreams of revenge."

The creative writer perceives his world once and for all in childhood and adolescence, and his whole career is an effort to illustrate his private world in terms of the great public world we all share.

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With the death of James the religious sense was lost to the English novel.

How tired we have become of the pure novel, the tradition founded by Flaubert and reaching its magnificent tortuous climax in England in the works of Henry James.

When—perhaps I was fourteen at the time—I took Miss Marjorie Bowen's The Viper of Milan *from the library shelf, the future for better or worse really struck. From that moment I began to write... Why? On the surface* The Viper of Milan *is only the story of a war between Gian Galeazzo Visconti, Duke of Milan, and Mastino della Scala, Duke of Verona, told with zest and cunning and an amazing pictorial sense. Why did it creep and color and explain the terrible living world of the stone stairs and the never quiet dormitory?... As for Visconti, with his beauty, his patience and his genius for evil, I had watched him pass by many a time in his black Sunday suit smelling of moth-balls. His name was Carter. He exercised terror from a distance like a snowcloud over the young fields. Goodness has only once found a perfect incarnation in a human body and never will again, but evil can always find a home there. Human nature is not black and white but black and grey. I read all that in* The Viper of Milan *and I looked round and saw that it was so* (1).

And finally, a selection from Æ Russell which Greene considers among his favorite lines of verse:

In ancient shadows and twilights
Where childhood had strayed,
The world's great sorrows were born
And its heroes were made.
In the lost boyhood of Judas
Christ was betrayed.

(1) *For biographical note on Marjorie Bowen see page* 122.

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SCENE

The eighteenth century succeeds to the twentieth on the ground floors at the bottom of St. James's Street. The gloss and the cellophane of oyster bars and travel agencies are wrapped incongruously round the legs of the dignified houses. Graham Greene lives here at the commercial end of this thoroughfare in a flat on the first floor of a narrow house sandwiched between the clubs of the aristocracy and St. James's Palace. Above him, General Auchinleck, the soldier who was beaten by Rommel; below him, the smartest oyster bar in Europe; opposite the second smartest.

Readers of *Cakes and Ale* will remember that it was near here that Maugham met Hugh Walpole, but it is not the sort of area in which one expects to find a novelist, even a successful novelist. It's an area black with smartness, the Rolls-Royces and the bowler hats of the men are black, the court shoes and the correct suits of the women are black and in the most august flats even the bathing pools set into the floors of the bathrooms are paved with black marble. Nearby are the courtyard and sundial of Pickering Place where only the very rich penetrate to eat and wine in Carolinean isolation.

Isolation, the isolation of anonymity rather than that of wealth, is probably the lure for Greene, for he is, or was until recently, a man shy of the contacts that congeal to fame. Brown suited, brown shoed, browned face, he opened the door when we rang and ushered us up above the oyster bar to the large room. It was cold for April and a large number of electric fires were burning in various corners of the room. A many-lamped standard of Scandinavian design stood by the window; a couple of bulbs were lit, they made as much difference to the watery April light as a pair of afterburners to a flagging jet engine. They revealed a book-lined room with a desk, a dictaphone and a typewriter; great padded armchairs and a furry rug. A painting by Jack Yeats overstood the mantle; sombre, Celtic, yet delicate, it had something in common with the red pastel drawings by Henry Moore whose sad classicism against the wall was in keeping with the brownness that dominated the whole room. Brown as the headmaster's study or the little office in Lagos where he once said he might willingly have spent forty dreary years, brown as his collection of books was blue—blue with the blueness that

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the bindings of English academic publishers give to the shelves and studies of dons and scholarly men of letters. It was a shock; subconsciously we had expected black and purple of a Catholic bookshop; a violence to match Mexico, Brighton and West Africa—what we had found was a snuggery, a den such as might be found in any vicarage or small country house in England. The only suggestion of an obsession, or of anything out of the ordinary (for so many people have Henry Moores these days) was a collection of seventy-four different miniature whiskey bottles, ranged on top of a bookcase, bizarre as an international convention of Salesian novices.

In the retreat of the man within the novelist, the man whom we had come to besiege, they were a welcome discovery.

INTERVIEWERS

Mr. Greene, we thought that we could make the best use of our time here if we brought along a few focal questions and let the conversation eddy round them. We felt that any formal questionnaire which we might make out would be based only on a knowledge of your written work and that a portion of the answers would be contained in the assumptions that allowed us to formulate the questions; we wanted to get beyond this and so we have come prepared to let the conversation lead us and to try to find out, so far as you will let us, the unknown things about you.

GREENE

Very frank. What will you have to drink? (*He produced a bottle and brought water in a majolica jug.*)

INTERVIEWERS

Shall we begin by working backwards from your latest production, your play *The Living Room.* It has not been seen in America yet so you will excuse us if we go into it in some detail.

GREENE

Have you seen this play yourselves?

INTERVIEWERS

No, a percipient girl saw it for us—she went down to Ports-

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mouth and came back with a review, a synopsis and a great admiration for it.

GREENE

I am glad; it's my first play. I've been a film man to date and I was rather afraid that I had written it in such filmic terms that it might not have succeeded as a play.

INTERVIEWERS

She enjoyed it well enough. She felt that you had conveyed the tense, haunted atmosphere of a house in which a family was decaying because of its ill-conceived gentility and religion; that you had made a drama out of the situation of the girl who was lost in the desert between the unhappiness, truth and family that lay in the background and the lover and mirage of happiness that lay in the foreground. Her main criticism, and this perhaps has something to do with what you were saying just now about the difference between film and theatrical technique, was that you had made the drama depend too much on dialogue and not enough on action.

GREENE

There I disagree. I obeyed the unities. I confined myself to one set and I made my characters act, one upon the other. What other sort of action can you have? I get fed up with all this nonsense of ringing people up and lighting cigarettes and answering the doorbell that passes for action in so many modern plays. No, what I meant about filmic terms was that I was so used to the dissolve that I had forgotten about the curtain and so used to the camera, which is only turned on when it is wanted, that I had forgotten that actors and actresses are on the stage all the time and I had left out many functional lines. Still most of that has been put right now.

INTERVIEWERS

Then the criticism, if it stands, means that the dialogue fell short in some other way; perhaps it was too closely related to the dialogue of your novels which doesn't often carry the burden of the action.

GREENE

I think that is nearer the mark: I tried to fuse everything

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and put it into the dialogue but I did not quite succeed. (*With a smile*) I will next time.

INTERVIEWERS

The particular thing which impressed this critic of ours was your attitude towards the girl's suicide. This is what she writes: "The central point of much of Greene's writing has been suicide, in Catholic doctrine the most deadly sin. But in this play at least his interpretation of it is not a doctrinal one. We are left quite definitely feeling that her soul is saved, if anyone's is, and the message of the play, for it does not pretend not to have a message, is not mere Catholic propaganda but of far wider appeal. It is a plea to believe in a God who Father Browne, the girl's confessor, admits may not exist, but belief can only do good not ill and without it we cannot help ourselves...the girl's suicide will probably be the only answer visible to most people but Father Browne's own unshaken faith, his calm acceptance of her death, implies that there is another, but that the struggle for it must be unceasing."

GREENE

Yes I would say that that is roughly true but the message is still Catholic.

INTERVIEWERS

How do you make that out?

GREENE

The church is compassionate you know...

INTERVIEWERS

Sorry to interrupt you but could we ask a correlative question now to save going back later?

GREENE

Go ahead.

INTERVIEWERS

Scobie in *The Heart of the Matter* committed suicide too. Was it your purpose when you wrote *The Living Room* to

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show a similar predicament and to show that suicide in certain circumstances can almost amount to an act of redemption?

GREENE

Steady, steady. Let's put it this way. I write about situations that are common, universal might be more correct, in which my characters are involved and from which only faith can redeem them, though often the actual manner of the redemption is not immediately clear. They sin, but there is no limit to God's mercy and because this is important, there is a difference between not confessing in fact and the complacent and the pious may not realize it.

INTERVIEWERS

In this sense Scobie, Rose (the girl in *The Living Room*), the boy Pinkie in *Brighton Rock* and the whiskey priest of *The Power and the Glory* are all redeemed?

GREENE

Yes, though redemption is not the exact word. We must be careful of our language. They have all understood in the end. This is perhaps the religious sense.

INTERVIEWERS

So we have touched the nerve of the theme, the theme that gives, as you have said somewhere yourself, to a shelf of novels the unity of a system?

GREENE

Yes, or rather it explains the unity of a group of my novels which is now, I think, finished.

INTERVIEWERS

Which group?

GREENE

Brighton Rock, *The Power and the Glory*, *The Heart of the Matter*, and *The End of the Affair*. My next novel will not deal explicitly with Catholic themes at all.

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INTERVIEWERS

So the *New Statesman* gibe that *The End of the Affair* is the last novel which a layman will be able to read is about to be disproved?

GREENE

Yes, I think so, as far as one can tell oneself. I think that I know what the next novel is about but one never really knows, of course, until it's finished.

INTERVIEWERS

Was that so of the earlier books?

GREENE

The very earliest ones particularly...

INTERVIEWERS

Yes, what about them? How did you find their subjects? Their historical romanticism is so different from what came later, even from *The Entertainments.*

GREENE

How does one find one's subjects?—gradually I suppose. My first three—*The Man Within*, *The Name of Action*, *Rumour at Nightfall*—as far as one is influenced by anybody and I don't think that one is consciously influenced, were influenced by Stevenson and Conrad and they are what they are because at the time those were the subjects that I wanted to write about. *The Entertainments* (*Stamboul Train*, written a year after *Rumour at Nightfall* is the first of them; then *Gun for Sale*, *The Confidential Agent*, *The Ministry of Fear*, and *The Third Man and The Fallen Idol*) are distinct from the novels because as the name implies they do not carry a message (horrible word).

INTERVIEWERS

They show traces though of the same obsession; they are written from the same point of view...

GREENE

Yes, I wrote them. They are not all that different.

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INTERVIEWERS

There is a great break between *Rumour at Nightfall* and *England Made Me* (our favorite novel of yours). What caused the historical novelist to turn into the contemporary one?

GREENE

I have a particularly soft spot for *England Made Me*, too. The book came about when I began *Stamboul Train*. I had to write a pot-boiler, a modern adventure story, and I suddenly discovered that I liked the form, that the writing came easily, that I was beginning to find my world. In *England Made Me* I let myself go in it for the first time.

INTERVIEWERS

You had begun to read James and Mauriac?

GREENE

Yes, I had begun to change. I had found that what I wanted to express, my fixations if you like, could best be expressed in the melodramatic, the contemporary and later the Catholic novel.

INTERVIEWERS

What influence has Mauriac had over you?

GREENE

Again very little I think.

INTERVIEWERS

But you told Kenneth Allot, who quotes it in his book about you, that Mauriac had a distinct influence.

GREENE

Did I? That is the sort of thing that one says under pressure. I read *Thérèse* in 1930 and was turned up inside but, as I have said, I don't think that he had any influence on me unless it was an unconscious one. Our Catholicism is very different: I don't see the resemblance that people talk about.

INTERVIEWERS

Where do the differences in your Catholicism lie?

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GREENE

Mauriac's sinners sin against God whereas mine, however hard they try, can never quite manage to... (*His voice fell.*)

INTERVIEWERS

Then Mauriac is almost a Manichee whereas you... (*the telephone rang and when, after a brief conversation, Greene came back to his long low seat between the electric fires and topped up the glasses, the conversation was not resumed, for the point, we thought, if not implied, was difficult for him to discuss.*)

INTERVIEWERS

Can we now discuss this fresh period that you mentioned just now?

GREENE

We can but I don't think that you'll find out much, for it has not begun yet. All that I can tell you is that I do know that my next novel is to be about an entirely different set of people with entirely different roots.

INTERVIEWERS

Perhaps then it would be more profitable to talk about the roots of your previous sets of characters? If we leave the historical romantic novels and *The Entertainments* out of it for the moment and concentrate on the contemporary ones it is obvious that there is a relationship between the characters which is a product in part of your absorption with failure, pursuit and poverty, and in part with interest in a particular type of person.

GREENE

I agree with you, of course, when you say that there is a relationship between, let us say, Anthony Farrant in *England Made Me* and Pinkie, or Scobie, even—but they are not the same sort of person even if they are the expressions of what critics are pleased to call my fixations. I don't know exactly where they came from but I think that I have now got rid of them.

INTERVIEWERS

Ah, now, these fixations—they are what really matter, aren't they? We don't quite understand why you consider that it is so important for a novelist to be dominated in this way.

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GREENE

Because if he is not he has to rely on his talent, and talent, even of a very high order, cannot sustain an achievement, whereas a ruling passion gives, as I have said, to a shelf of novels the unity of a system.

INTERVIEWERS

Mr. Greene, if a novelist did not have this ruling passion, might it be possible to fabricate it?

GREENE

How do you mean?

INTERVIEWERS

Well, put it this way and I hope we won't seem to be impertinent: the contrast between the Nelson Places and the Mexicos of the novels and this flat in St. James's is marked. Urbanity, not tragedy, seems to reign in this room. Do you find, in your own life, that it is difficult to live at the high pitch of perception that you require of your characters?

GREENE

Well this is rather difficult to answer. Could you perhaps qualify the question a bit?

INTERVIEWERS

You made Scobie say in *The Heart of the Matter*: *Point me out the happy man and I will show you either egotism, selfishness, evil or else an absolute ignorance.* What worries us is that you yourself seem to be so much happier than we had expected. Perhaps we are being rather naive but the seventy-four miniature whiskey bottles, the expression on your face, so different from the fixed set look of your photograph, the whole atmosphere, seem to be the products of something much more positive than that very limited optimum of happiness that you described in *The Power and the Glory* in this passage: *the world is all much of a piece: it is engaged everywhere in the same subterranean struggle... there is no peace anywhere where there is life; but there are quiet and active sectors of the line.*

GREENE

(*With a smile*) Oh yes, I see what troubles you. I think

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that you have misjudged me and my consistency. This flat, my way of life—these are simply my hole in the ground.

INTERVIEWERS

A moderately comfortable hole.

GREENE

Shall we leave it at that?

INTERVIEWERS

Of course. There are just one or two other questions on a similar tack: many of your most memorable characters, Raven for instance, are from low life. Have you ever had any experience of low life?

GREENE

No, very little.

INTERVIEWERS

What did you know about poverty?

GREENE

I have never known it. I was "short," yes, in the sense that I had to be careful for the first eight years of my adult life but I have never been any closer.

INTERVIEWERS

Then you don't draw your characters from life?

GREENE

No, one never knows enough about characters in real life to put them into novels. One gets started and then, suddenly, one can not remember what toothpaste they use; what are their views on interior decoration, and one is stuck utterly. No, major characters emerge: minor ones may be photographed.

INTERVIEWERS

Well now, how do you work? Do you work at regular hours?

GREENE

I used to; now I set myself a number of words.

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INTERVIEWERS

How many?

GREENE

Five hundred, stepped up to seven fifty as the book gets on. I re-read the same day, again the next morning and again and again until the passage has got too far behind to matter to the bit that I am writing. Correct in type, final correction in proof.

INTERVIEWERS

Do you correct much?

GREENE

Not over-much.

INTERVIEWERS

Did you always want to be a writer?

GREENE

No, I wanted to be a businessman and all sorts of other things; I wanted to prove to myself that I could do something else.

INTERVIEWERS

Then the thing that you could always do was write?

GREENE

Yes, I suppose it was.

INTERVIEWERS

What happened to your business career?

GREENE

Initially it lasted for a fortnight. They were a firm, I remember, of tobacco merchants. I was to go up to Leeds to learn the business and then go abroad. I couldn't stand my companion. He was an insufferable bore. We would play double noughts and crosses and he always won. What finally got me was when he said: "We'll be able to play this on the way out, won't we?" I resigned immediately.

INTERVIEWERS

Then you became a journalist?

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GREENE

Yes, for the same reason—that I wanted to prove I could do something else.

INTERVIEWERS

But after *The Man Within* you gave it up?

GREENE

Then I became a professional author.

INTERVIEWERS

So that is what you meant when you said "I am an author who is a Catholic?"

GREENE

Indeed it is. I don't believe that anyone had ever realized that I was a Catholic until 1938 when I began to review for the Tablet and, for fun, or rather to give system to a series of reviews of unrelated books, I started to review from a Catholic standpoint. If it had not been for that...

INTERVIEWERS

But surely a person would have to be very obtuse who reads any novel from *Brighton Rock* onwards and does not realize it?

GREENE

Some people still manage to. In fact, a Dutch priest wrote to me the other day, discussing *The Power and the Glory*, and concluded his letter: "Well I suppose that even if you aren't a Catholic, you are not too hostile to us."

INTERVIEWERS

Oh well, internal criticism.

GREENE

All the same you see what I mean.

INTERVIEWERS

Yes, you are "a writer who is a Catholic;" we seem to have cleared up that, but there are still a few gaps to be filled before we can know why you are a writer. Do you remember

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that you once said on the wireless that when you were fourteen or so and read Marjorie Bowen's *Viper of Milan* you immediately began to scribble imitation after imitation: *from that moment I began to write. All the other possible futures slid away...*

GREENE

Yes, that was so, I am very grateful to Marjorie Bowen. In that talk I was engaged on a little mild baiting of the intellectuals. Pritchett had said that Turgenev had influenced him most; somebody else, somebody else. I chose Marjorie Bowen because as I have told you, I don't think that the books that one reads as an adult influence one as a writer. For example, of the many many books on the art of the novel, only Percy Lubbock's *The Craft of Fiction* has interested me at all. But books such as Marjorie Bowen's read at a young age do influence one considerably. It is a very fine book you know. I re-read it again recently.

INTERVIEWERS

We haven't read it but from your description in the broadcast (*reprinted at the front of this interview*) it seems that the book has many features in common with your writing as well as with your philosophy. You said that *The Viper of Milan* gave you your pattern of life: *that religion later might explain it to me in other terms, but the pattern was already there—perfect evil walking the world where perfect good can never walk again, and only the pendulum ensures that after all in the end justice is done.* That explains a great deal about your philosophy and it seems that the heightened colors and the violence of the Renaissance, as it is depicted by Miss Bowen and also as it is shown in the plays of Webster, also have their counterpart in your writing. As Edwin Muir has said of you: "Everything is shown up in a harsh light and casts fantastic colors."

GREENE

Yes, there is a lot to that. It is true, to a certain extent, about the earlier books but I don't think that it does justice to the later ones, for melodrama is one of my working tools and it enables me to obtain effects that would be unobtainable

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otherwise, but on the other hand I am not deliberately melodramatic; don't get too annoyed if I say that I write in the way that I do because I am what I am.

INTERVIEWERS

Do you ever need the stimulus of drink to write?

GREENE

No, on the contrary, I can only write when I am absolutely sober.

INTERVIEWERS

Do you find collaboration easy, in particular collaboration with directors and producers?

GREENE

Well, I have been exceptionally lucky both with Carol Reed and recently with Peter Glanvill. I like film work, even the impersonality of it. I have managed to retain a certain amount of control over my own stories so I have not suffered as badly as some people seem to have; all the same, film-making can be a distressing business for, when all is said and done, a writer's part in making a film is relatively small.

INTERVIEWERS

Did it take you long to learn?

GREENE

I learnt a lot on some not very good films before the war so I was into my stride by the time that *The Fallen Idol* and *The Third Man* came along.

INTERVIEWERS

Do you see much of your fellow authors?

GREENE

Not much, they are not one's material. A few of them are very dear friends of mine but for a writer to spend much of his time in the company of authors is, you know, a form of masturbation.

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INTERVIEWERS

What was the nature of your friendship with Norman Douglas?

GREENE

We were so different that we could be friends. He was very tolerant in his last years and if he thought me odd he never said so.

INTERVIEWERS

Is there, in fact, any relationship between his paganism and your Catholicism?

GREENE

Not really, but his work, for which I have the very greatest admiration, was so remote from mine that I was able to enjoy it completely; to me it was like a great block of stone, which not being a sculptor myself, I had no temptation to tamper with, yet could admire wholeheartedly for its beauty and strength.

INTERVIEWERS

Yes, of course, there couldn't be any real connection between your writing and his—or between yours and Mauriac's. For as you have said, your sinners can never sin against God no matter how hard they try but...

(The telephone rang. Mr. Greene smiled in a faint deprecatory way as if to signify he'd said all he wished to say, picked up the instrument and spoke into it.)

GREENE

Hello? Hello Peter! How is Andrea? Oh, it's the other Peter. How is Maria? No, I can't do it this evening. I've got Mario Soldati on my hands—we're doing a film in Italy this summer. I'm co-producing. How about Sunday? Battersea? Oh, they're not open? Well, then, we'll go to my pleasant little Negro night club round the corner...

—MARTIN SHUTTLEWORTH
SIMON RAVEN

(This is the third in a series on the Art of Fiction. The first two authors interviewed were E. M. Forster and François Mauriac.)

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A SUITE FOR JEWELS

I

I am known
by my heart's green core
as emerald.

I am wrong
in a beggar's hand
or a child's.

Out of the sun
I rob that glint
no wind can douse.

Crumpled and dark
unborn I gleam in the Earth's
swung gloom.

Hone me, only
a diamond can
wear me, only
a simple Queen:

Or a man to be slain
for powdering my grain
in a sachet of green
to soothe his brain.

II

The pigeon's blood delights the peregrine.
Beezled in sceptre to be the fagot
Of the King's word. Colour of lust, mine
Incidentally with sight beyond
The Asian river where, gently I washed
For empires. The knave my paramour;
Dyed by my signet, powerful his finger:
Or on the apron of her breasts I crozier.

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III

I, diamond, brighter the new-day
on a thicket of drawn knives
never than I; quiet in light
am magnet to the flights of sun.
Plain, I split on my prism's edge
white to incarnadine and again white.
Within my eye the acorn and the forest
Are chastised on a carbon anvil
And ages gleam.
Flesh is my shame. Serf to be worn
I in light outmatch my craftsman's gaze
And my kingdom crowns the King
His wand and talisman. I, illuminate,
Only the ton can snuff my beam, or thief,
Or beggarmaid.

IV

Worn on a golden spoke
With all the value of that sea
Held by Europe and Africa
Is my cold body.

A bright far eye,
But blind as it is blue.
The sun's dumb fire in me
Is Lazarus, his newsight
Sapphire.

V

To possess me is to love me:
I am a whorl no adze can touch me:
Oval the labour of lagoons moulds me:
What skin can suffer comparison of me?
To pierce, to thread, to twine moons of me
Is to bring collars to a nightwise earth:
Pearl is my nature and my soul is dirt.

—Christopher Logue

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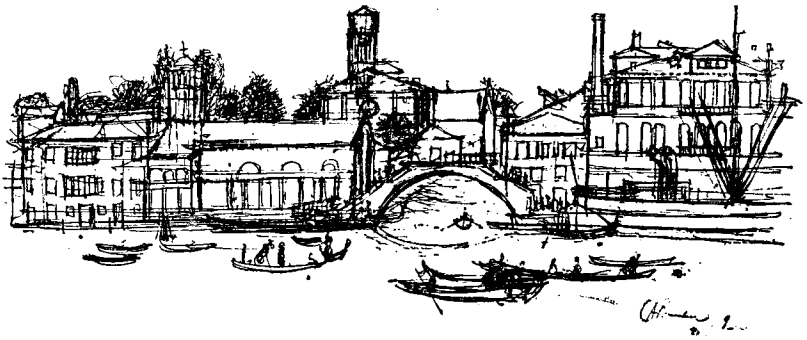

Venise 1952

Carzou is a child of good luck, born in the Midi on New Year's Day, 1907, and now by his animation and mischievous eye making a lie of time. Thirty, one might say, but already in 1929 when he received a diploma in architecture he had been sketching in the *académies libres* of Montparnasse for four years. Entirely self-taught, he has shown some fourteen exhibitions of his work since 1939. His canvases hang in collections as far apart as Egypt and Kansas City.

He has been called a surrealist and a primitive but admits no school. One finds in his paintings that mysterious plain stretching to the vanishing point which is de Chirico's discovery—"the nostalgia of the infinite"—(beloved as well of Dali, Berman, Tchelitchev and Bérard) but more typical are his views of kitchens and attics of the Midi, the green province of Burgundy, or the rich decay of Venice.

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With two decors and their accompanying costumes Carzou became the pet of Paris: the Inca tableau in *Les Indes Galantes* (a volcano on a sun-baked plain populated by parrot-bright Conquistadores and jeweled, feathered Incas—all bathed in lavish golden light) and Petit's ballet of *Le Loup* (a dense green-grey forest and a bright theatre on wheels). This last, of astonishing liveliness, is the best example of Carzou's vision of a linear world, half briar and half skeleton. His costume designs done in sharp strokes of brilliant gouache—when executed in appliqués of ribbons and stuffs—become aerial and vibrant. Proof of his great decorative talent is the simultaneous invitation by the Opéra and the de Cuévas ballet to supply a new set of designs for *Giselle*. While pondering his choice Carzou quietly finishes designs for Peguy's *Jeanne d'Arc* to be mounted by Jean Marchat in January at the Comédie-Française.

—E. W.

Paysage du Cantal 1951

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Venise 1952

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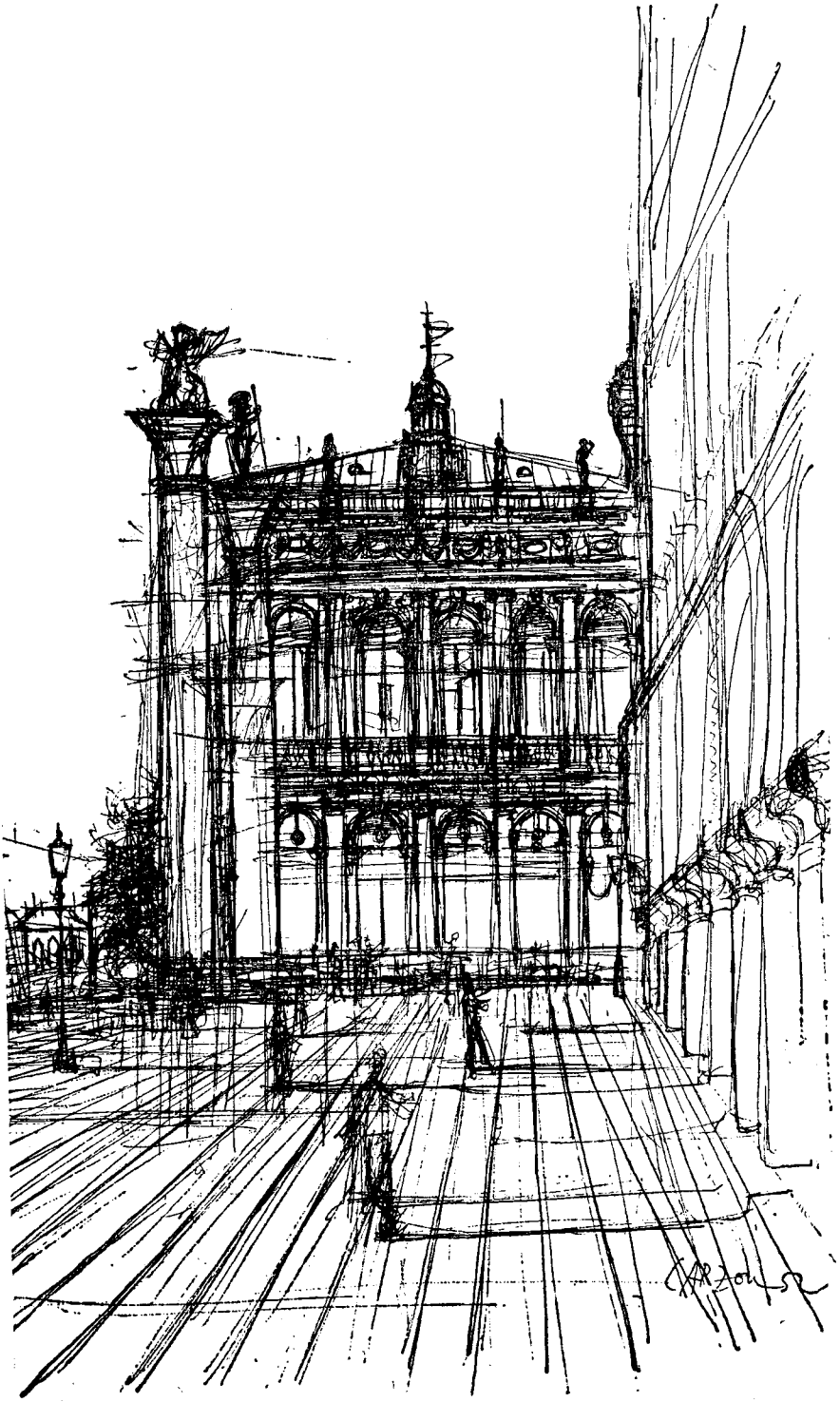

Venise 1952

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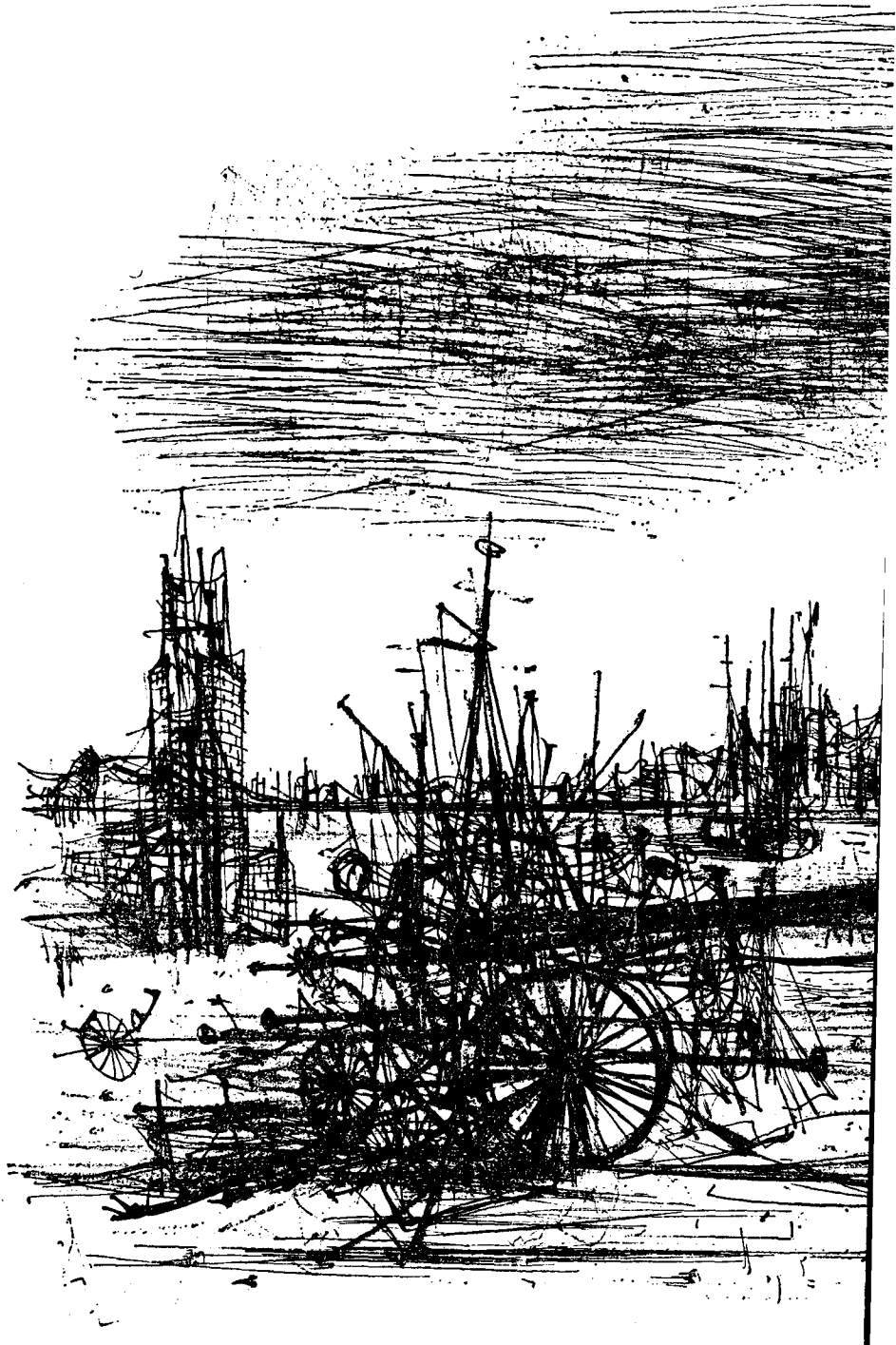

Port Détruit

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1952

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Nue 1945

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Nue 1945

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Forêt des Pyrénées

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1949

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La Fête Foraine

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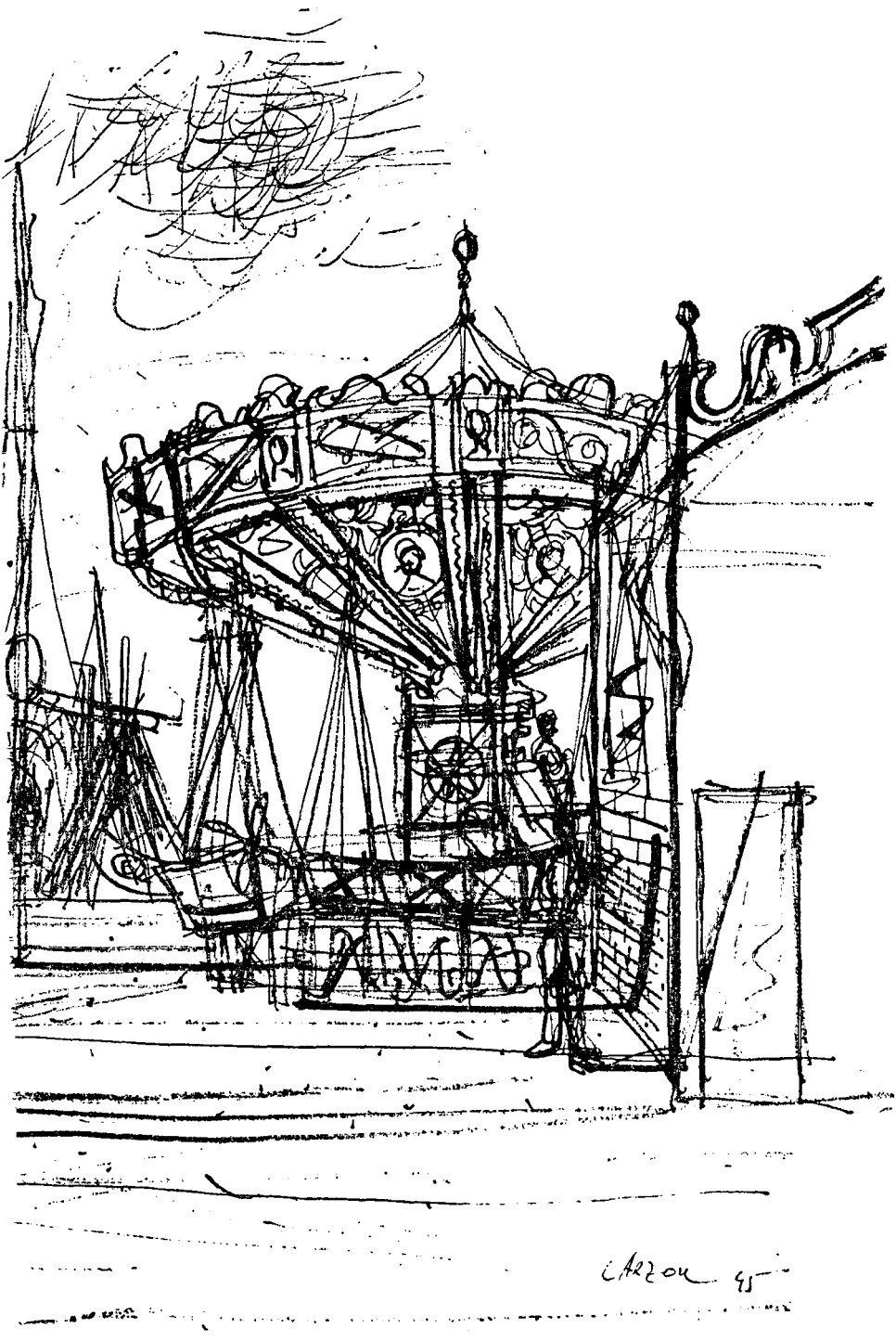

1945

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PATI HILL

LINDA

IF it looked like a good long rain, Jan would set the basket inside the door and fly back out and down to the summer-house under the first big splashing drops before anyone had time to say come back or take your sweater, and there she would sit the whole of the afternoon in the unaccustomed dark, looking through the ancient magazines the Misses Allison had stored there from Time Immemorial, listening to the rain drum on the roof and hearing it dripping more slowly in the corners of the room where the roof leaked. There she would sit with her hands and feet cold and damp, while she dusted off the ladies of other days, standing in front of their Pierce Arrows that looked like toys, or trailing their dresses along the floor and talking to the elegant young men who leaned forever gratefully against the mantlepiece. My One Rose, my only love—and smiling devilishly from beneath her pure golden lashes, Miss Teasedale let fall the fatal words from her enchanting lips, "Mr. Alderson, it is my painful duty to inform your attentions are no longer acceptable... to my Aunt." To be continued next month.

But next month was never there, was, in fact, nowhere and perhaps never had been, and anyway it did not matter, for it was only a part of that mysterious world of grown-up life, and it was not until she knew Linda that she found out this life did not really exist anymore. It made her feel sadder than before, though always she felt sad leaving these people there on the floor in the dust when the sun came out again and she could no longer ignore it, and like a reluctant moth she left the darkness and stretched her damp cramped limbs, walking

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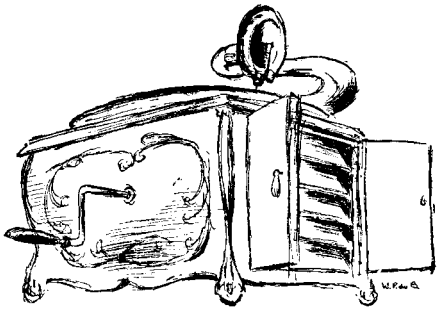

about then aimlessly in the garden, by the swing, in all the places where it was wet now and had not been before, as though to become re-acquainted with the place.

When it rained like this just after lunch, the whole afternoon was lost because she could not get properly fixed on anything else and time seemed confused as though it had been evening and then was day again for a while, and in it all, in the wetness of her shoes and the thinness of the sun, and in the smell of the rain, there was a sort of sadness that she could not get over. Oh then if ever she were lonely, or if her continuous and natural state of loneliness had not made her immune to loneliness, she would have been lonely, for the world seemed desolate and vacant, and there was no reality in anything.

Except John-Thomas, that is.

Only John-Thomas was different in this respect, and this was possibly because he had his roots not in flesh and blood but in sawdust and plush, though nobody but Janet's grandmother could have known this, for no one but she could have recalled, upon hearing that name, that John-Thomas was originally a bear and that they had bought him together on a cold day before Christmas at Miller & Rhoads in Richmond where they had gone together to see Santa Claus and in the end had not seen him, the crowd being what it was and Janet really too small to make it worth the trouble. Only her grandmother could have remembered how he came into existence and began to live. How he turned from plush to being and went everywhere with them. Don't forget John-Thomas, they would say. No, don't forget *him*. But she

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was dead these many years of a tumor in her right side which she had always said she had and said up to the last, with no one believing her because she said so many other things she had and really hadn't or didn't matter.

Once when they all went on a picnic in the new Buick, with a vase on the side for flowers and little fur puff balls to make the blinds go up and down, they spread a blanket in the clover and took a picture of the baby and John-Thomas with his bear back turned and when they got the prints back from the print shop, someone said, Why, what on earth is that behind the baby? and everyone laughed and said Oh, that's John-Thomas--southern exposure—and when they said, John-Thomas? who is John-Thomas? they laughed harder and said, oh you know John-Thomas that's the famous Teddy Bear. But still later when they got out the old prints and looked them over and someone said, what on earth is that behind the baby? no one could remember and they looked and looked and nobody could remember and finally Janet's mother Alice said, well I guess it's just a shadow you know, and rubbed her finger across the print, her thin sensitive abrasive finger, and said, I suppose it's just a shadow and Jan said to John-Thomas who happened to be standing there, that's just a shadow, John-Thomas, with the inflections of Alice, you know what a shadow is, don't you John-Thomas? because in those days John-Thomas was not so wise as he was later, was just a shadow of Jan in fact and could only do and say what Jan told him to. John-Thomas did it, Jan would say, John-Thomas had a tantrum and broke everything up but I punished him, and Alice would say I hope you punished him well because he seems to be getting out of hand again and John-Thomas would say he was sorry because he had no will of his own. He wasn't a bear anymore but he had no will of his own and he just said yes and no and got punished in the garden.

That was John-Thomas.

Now I am going through the forest, said Jan not going through the forest but dreaming she was going through the forest. Now I am going through the forest to Linda's house.

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Where is Linda's house? said John-Thomas.

Over there, said Jan. Now I am going through the forest to Linda's house.

Are you taking me? said John-Thomas.

No, said Jan, you're too young. I am going myself and I'm not taking you.

But she didn't go.

She lay under the iron dog in the garden looking up at his iron underbelly and not going.

Why don't you go over to Linda Carter's house? said Aunt Grace, you could take the shortcut through Perkins and get there in no time.

I don't know, said Jan. I don't know why I don't go to Linda's house. I was thinking of it. But she didn't go.

She didn't go and she didn't go and the days came and went and she didn't go and Linda didn't come.

She said she wouldn't come and she didn't come.

She said she wouldn't come until Jan came. That's why she didn't come.

Why don't you go on over to Linda's house? said John-Thomas.

Oh I don't know, said Jan.

I don't know.

In the sky three birds and a thundercloud passed overhead and through the woods, two dogs followed each other and under the ground a mole dug. You could not see the mole but he dug dug dug, coming up for air and going down and digging again. All day long he dug.

How far could a mole dig if he started digging and dug and dug and dug and never came up for air just dug and dug all day?

Oh, I don't know, said John-Thomas, far enough, I guess.

Now I am going through the forest, said Jan, not going through the forest but dreaming she was.

When Jan thought about Linda she began to think about something else. Anything else because she did not want to think about Linda. She did not know why she did not want to think about Linda but she did not. When Aunt Grace

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said, why don't you go over to Linda's sometimes instead of making her come over here all the time? Jan said, Oh I don't know, I don't know why I don't go over to Linda's. I'll go over to Linda's tomorrow, but when tomorrow was today she never did. You don't expect she'll keep on coming over here all the time if you never go over there said Aunt Grace, she'll get tired of coming here pretty soon and then you won't have anyone to play with in the afternoon, but Jan did not go over to Linda's. Just come over for tea once, said Linda, come over once and let mother see you're real and I'll let you off, said Linda. Just come once Janny Jan to show we're friends, but Jan said no, no I can't, not today.

She did not want to go over to Linda's and so she tried to make John-Thomas say she could not go to Linda's, but it was no good because John-Thomas was not really around.

Ever since Jan could remember she had had John-Thomas. Ever since she could remember, John-Thomas had been around. When Jan got up in the morning, John-Thomas got up. When Jan went to bed at night, John-Thomas went to bed. When Jan came to New York to see Alice, John-Thomas came to New York too. How is John-Thomas? Alice would say. Give my love to John-Thomas, she would write. We'll consult with John-Thomas, they would say, and let you know. He was always around.

And then suddenly that summer, he was not.

How is John-Thomas? Jan's mother asked when Jan came to stay with her in the new studio apartment, and Jan said, oh all right, because she did not want to say he was not around anymore and when Alice went on, she said, oh John-Thomas is this or that, but when she was alone she played with Toppy or Jean or someone else or no one at all because John-Thomas was not there. At night she left the door open in case John-Thomas should want to come in and in the mornings she looked about for him in every new place she went but he was gone. Sometimes she imagined a new John-Thomas or tried to recapture the old one, but all that would come to her of John-Thomas was a blurry image or if it began to

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be sharp it turned into a cardboard cutout like the ones in the drugstore holding Coca-cola.

Anything she tried to imagine that involved John-Thomas turned into a stage set or a street-corner or someplace she was not trying to imagine but was someplace she had seen before. Suddenly she was not able to imagine as she had used to imagine in the old days, freely and out of nowhere. She tried to tell her mother about this but she could not make herself clear. Everyone imagines things they knew before, Alice told her. It isn't strange in the least. But it was not true because when Jan was asleep she could imagine again and it was the way it was before, out of nowhere and nothing, but when she was awake she could not imagine properly anymore because something always got in the way. If she was imagining a castle and she had almost got it in her mind a street-car saying "Broadway and 42nd Street" came in front of it. Or if she was trying to imagine a moonlight night and it was nearly in her mind, there would be a street light suddenly by the path.

The worst thing, the thing that made her most desperate was that she could no longer imagine anything limitless. That is to say she could not imagine ocean for example because the minute she had got the water down, the opposite shore would appear. She could not imagine endless forest because there was always a house in it with smoke coming out of the chimney. She could not even imagine sky, just sky, without a tree or a bird or something else.

Don't read me about forest or water or anywhere that is endless, said Jan, because I can't imagine it any more, I can't imagine anything I don't know.

Don't read me about fantastic things or long ago, Jan said, because I can't imagine them. Read me about *now* and *here* and where I know, but when Alice read about now and here Jan was not interested and she roved about the room and Alice said, sit still or I will have to stop reading or, well, I don't think you are paying much attention to this story, and Jan would say, yes she was, and try to sit still so Alice would go on reading, but she was not interested.

When it was time to go to Laurel Jan was glad but she

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pretended to be sad and cried and buried her head in Alice's lap and bit the material of her skirt over her thigh.

Poor baby, said Alice, my poor poor baby. But you'll have John-Thomas to look out for you down there and you can help Aunt Grace with the gardening.

I don't have John-Thomas anymore, Jan said then, he is gone, and he's never coming back. · John-Thomas is dead.

John-Thomas doesn't want me to come over there, said Jan, and so I can't come, and when Linda said, who is John-Thomas? Jan made up a John-Thomas who was not the real John-Thomas and pretended she believed in him in a way that she had never believed in the old John-Thomas and Linda was delighted even though it meant Jan was not coming over. They spent the whole afternoon in the coach house talking about John-Thomas and discussing about John-Thomas and it was the best fun they had together so far, but the next day Linda had forgotten about it and started in all over again saying, when are you coming over? only this time she said, when is this John-Thomas going to let you come over? and Jan wished she had never told her that silly story.

He's never going to let me come over, said Jan. He owns me mind and body and whatever he says I must do I must do, and that's all there is to it. If you want to see me you will just have to come over here.

Then one day Linda came down the path to Jan's house holding one angular arm out in a crook, smiling and moving her lips queerly.

What's the matter with your arm? asked Jan. Did you hurt it?

Why, laughed Linda, don't you recognize your friend John-Thomas beside me? We were just having a talk, John-Thomas and I, as I was coming down the path. I told John-Thomas that I would give him just one more week to decide to come over to my house and then I will not see you any more.

No you weren't, said Jan, and what's more I think you are very unkind to joke about anything as serious as what I told

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you. After all, I wouldn't have told you if I hadn't had to and the least you could do is respect my confidence, and Jan put up her chin and looked in the other direction feeling hurt, pretending to be.

Oh Jan, cried Linda catching her hands and whirling her around so they had to look each other in the face, you're wonderful! You're just simply wonderful, let's go right away to my house and have tea. I'm going to kidnap you and take you right away to my house to tea, John-Thomas and all, and she started pulling Jan in the direction of the gate saying, what does your John-Thomas say to that? and Jan began to laugh too and allowed herself to be pulled and finally they were running down the path hand in hand, but at the gate Jan stopped and wouldn't go any farther.

But you can't stop when you're being kidnapped and I'm kidnapping you, and she pushed open the gate, but Jan would not go through and jerked away, suddenly angry, and said she wouldn't go and never would go and she wished Linda would go and never come back, and when Linda said, What is it, Jan? Is it that terrible John-Thomas making you say that? Jan said, no, there is no John-Thomas, I made it all up to fool you, I made it all up so I wouldn't have to tell you that I don't want to go to your house now or ever, I just don't want to go to see you and that's all there is to it Linda Carter, that's all there is to it in the world, what do you think of that? and she slammed the gate shut.

I think you're wonderful, said Linda, putting back the latch of the gate that had flown open, I think you're just simply wonderful, but Jan was gone gone gone into the forest and through the wood and over the hill and far away, and Linda walked home alone adjusting her Panama hat that was slightly too large in the crown with the hand that was banded by the amethyst ring her grandmother gave her on her tenth birthday, lost in a dream, my Linda, lost in a dream.

Then quite suddenly one afternoon after lunch, Jan went upstairs and put on her best print dress and her new shoes and brushed her hair and washed her face and cleaned her fin-

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gernails and everything anyone does when they are going out, without being told. When she came downstairs Aunt Grace looked at her and looked again and said, You certainly are dressed up to kill, Janny, where are you off to? and Jan said: I'm going to see Linda, and Aunt Grace said: Well, it's high time, and went out in the garden to cut some flowers to send Linda's mother.

Oh don't make me take anything, said Jan, I don't feel like taking anything with me when I go, but Aunt Grace did not see the point of this and cut the flowers anyway and tied them in a damp newspaper. I wish I didn't have to take anything, said Jan, I just want to go like this without anything, she said taking the flowers and holding them away from her not to get wet from the stems.

The reason she said this when her Aunt Grace began cutting the flowers was because she did not really intend to go to see Linda and she said she was going to see Linda only because she had to have a reason for getting dressed up without being told, and if she had got to take flowers to Linda's mother it meant she would have to see Linda after all and she didn't want to.

Before she left she went out in the garden for a while and walked up and down trying to get a stomach-ache or think of something else she had to do or find some reason for not going to see Linda, but nothing came to her mind.

She even tried to imagine John-Thomas saying not to go to Linda's but that would not come either. So in the end she took the flowers and put a piece of hard candy in her mouth and started out going by the gate-way and the street-way and the road-way instead of by the path way and the back way, and walked slowly along rolling the candy, which turned out to be a flavor she did not like, around in her mouth like a marble.

Good bye, Aunt Grace, she said.

Good bye, good bye, said Aunt Grace, if you don't get started pretty soon the afternoon will be gone.

Aren't you going to wish me luck? asked Jan.

I don't see why I should wish you luck going over to Linda

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Carter's house a block and a half away by the road. Just watch out you don't get run over at the corner is all.

That's what I was thinking, said Jan, I was thinking I might get run over at the corner.

On the road a man stopped his car beside her and leaned out and opened the door. Jan drew away because she thought he might be thinking of kidnapping her but he only wanted to know the way to Vicksburg which she did not know herself.

As she passed in front of Perkins, their cocker spaniel, who had known her the whole of her life, forgot who she was and came rushing down the lawn barking and frothing at the mouth, and Jan was afraid he would bite her before he came to his senses, but it turned out he was just pretending and he followed her for a while.

At the corner she had a sudden intuition that if she crossed then even with nothing coming either way, as there wasn't at that time and for a long time after, she would be killed and she went away around behind some other houses and a garage in order to cross farther down, all the time clutching the flowers.

If Linda should be there by any chance, which Jan was sure she wouldn't be, she would pretend not to notice her at first and then she would say, oh, hello Linda, as if she had never expected to see her there and did not care if she did, Oh, hello Linda, Aunt Grace sent these flowers to your mother and said to tell her something or other that she would think of, and then she would hand Linda the flowers over the fence saying something like, see you later, or, sorry I can't stop I'm just going over to somewhere or other that would come to her.

Or no, better, she would look for Linda who would be sure to be there and go to her immediately, and hand her the flowers and say, oh, Linda, how nice to see you, I was just passing with some flowers for your mother and didn't expect to see you, and when Linda said, wonderful, like Linda was apt to say, come in or something like she would naturally say under the circumstances, Jan would say, oh, I wish I *could* but I'm going somewhere or other, or better still say, fine, and

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start to come in as if she were coming in, and then look at her watch and say, oh! dear no, really I can't because I'm just going somewhere else and I'm late.

That way she would have been there and yet at the same time not been and Linda would come. Not that she much cared if Linda came or not. No, she was not just saying that, she really didn't care if Linda came. After all the two of them did not have much in common and it was just as well if she didn't. That is to say, it is always silly to form an attachment with someone with whom you have very little in common and may never see again. It simply isn't worth while.

When she got there there was no one in the yard or anywhere else and she pushed open the gate and walked up the flagstone path which had strings on either side of it to keep people from tramping on the grass that was newly planted, to the door where she stood for a while trying to decide whether to use the knocker in the centre or the bell which was at the side or tap on the window in a more familiar way in case Linda were standing there behind it.

In the end she used the knocker and then rang the bell and was about to go away again thinking it had been a very long time when the door opened and the maid, Jetty, looked at her and said, Miss Linda ain't home, she's gone down to Bishop's to have her drawing lesson, and was about to close the door again when Jan said, I would like to see Mrs. Carter, please, I have brought some flowers from my Aunt for Mrs. Carter. Jetty looked for a minute as though she suspected this was not true, which it most clearly was, and then disappeared and stayed forever while Dicky Carter went by at the foot of the hall with something tin in his hand and something string that hung behind him and the clock struck and something sizzled in the kitchen and when Jetty came back she said to go out back, Mrs. Carter was out back resting.

She went with Jan then to show her how to get there, walking behind her through the living-room which was full of things that she had not seen before and Linda had seen always and through the glass porch where there were magazines on

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the floor and no one to read them and one glass empty, and through the last door to where she would have been if she had walked around and there was Mrs. Carter or someone who seemed to be the real Mrs. Carter though in no way resembling the Mrs. Carter she had previously imagined, lying in a deck chair.

Good afternoon, Mrs. Carter, said Jan, feeling more involved in saying good afternoon to Mrs. Carter and more involved in the Carter's house and everything that was Carter than she had meant to be by that time, good afternoon, Mrs. Carter, I have brought you some flowers from my aunt, and set them down on the table beside her and smiled and looked at the flowers and patted the dog on the head and smiled again.

Why aren't you a darling, said Mrs. Carter picking up the flowers and at the same time looking at Jan over the newspaper as though the smell of the flowers and the look would somehow combine to remind her in time who in the world it could be who had brought flowers from her aunt, but not much concerned because whoever it could be it could only be a friend of Linda's and so she said, well aren't you a darling, and, get yourself a chair and sit down here and have a Coke while I get Jetty to telephone to Linda, she's just gone for her drawing lesson and I'll get Jetty to telephone to her to come right away.

Oh, never mind, said Jan, never mind telephoning I only came over to bring the flowers and I never expected to see Linda you know, but Mrs. Carter sent Jetty to telephone anyway, leaving Jan sitting in a deck chair behind the house waiting for Linda to come home.

Afterward she tried to explain to Linda how it had been, how it had been that she had come to be behind Linda's house waiting for her when she came from her drawing lesson that afternoon, but Linda wouldn't listen to her and said instead, oh! Janny don't explain to me, let me have my illusions, and Jan let her have her illusions because it was not worth the trouble to explain anymore but still later she tried to explain and made Linda listen that time and explained how she had not intended to come to see her that afternoon

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and made Linda promise she understood even when she didn't want to. Not because she wanted Linda to think she wouldn't have wanted to come to see her—because probably Linda was right and she would have come to see her if she had thought anything about it, even a little bit—but because, after all, if she had not intended to come to see her and hadn't set out to come to see her, it was wrong to go on getting credit for a kind act which she did not have in mind at the time and she did not want anything but honesty between them. Linda promised she understood but Jan was not sure she did even when it was so clear because in some ways Linda was always stupid.

Let's go up to my room said Linda so they went up to Linda's room and closed the door and sat down on the bed and started going through old photograph albums of Linda's and some letters a girl wrote her from school and a bunch of invitations Linda had saved in a box and, when they had finished doing that and were about to take out a wooden chest full of newspaper clippings and watercolors and things Linda had taken out of the ladies' magazines, they put "Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life" on the record player and put the record player beside them on a chair to be in easy reach to wind and re-wind. After "Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life," they played "The Bells of St. Mary's," which was on the back and then Linda said they should go down and get some records but Jan said, no, they could just play "Ah Sweet Mystery of Life" over again and save themselves the trip. Linda told Jan she loved that record and often played it to herself at night with the window open and the stars outside and the lights off except for the one on her night table which was made in the shape of a seashell and gave practically no light except to see your way around with, in case you should want to see your way around in the middle of the night without really waking yourself up the whole way. Jan said she did not like "Ah Sweet Mystery of Life" so very much because of the singing in it and she did not like singing especially singing by a woman. But it's not a woman, said Linda, it's a man, only you've got it tuned up too high on speed and that makes it sound like a woman, and

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Jan said, no, that wasn't it, you could turn it down as far as you liked but it was still a woman, listen to that screechy part and say it's not a woman, and they turned it down and listened to the screechy part and it was surely a woman but when they turned it back up to normal you could not really tell if it was a woman or a man. Well, anyway, said Jan, I don't much like singing by anyone, woman or man. She did not know then how many times she would have listened to that singing by that voice that was neither woman nor man but was "Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life" played on a starlight night with the window open and the light on the night table on. How could she have?

When they had looked all through Linda's things, Jan said she would like to show Linda *her* things, but she did not have any of them here and Linda said, taking Jan's hand suddenly in her own—Oh, Jan I *wish* I could see your things, you must have the most wonderful things in the world. Someday you must show me everything you have, every little thing, and Jan said drawing away a little from this taking of hands and going to the window where still below Mrs. Carter lay on the lawn on her deck chair, with the bouquet of flowers beside her and the dog and everything as it was before, Jan said, well I have this one thing that is a Russian Easter Egg and when you open it there is another Easter egg inside and when you open that there is another inside, and inside this last one there used to be a teeny chicken made of ivory but I lost it one day when I was small and so there is nothing inside now, but it is fun to take it apart and put it back together again and if I ever found anything to go inside the last Easter egg I would give it to you.

Linda came to the window then and looked out too and said, now we are really friends, Jan, I know we are really friends forever and I am so glad, and that was when Jan tried to explain for the first time how she had not intended to come really, how it had been a mistake even though it turned out well in the end, but Linda would not listen and said, no I won't listen to you, come out of doors, come out in the sun and walk with me, so they turned off the record player and went

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downstairs and out the back way and started walking toward the Duck Pond which was not really a duck pond because the water was contaminated and the ducks had gone away but which they called the Duck Pond anyhow.

When they got there they stood looking at it for a while, fighting off the gnats and mosquitos, looking at it lying there among the trees, not moving, lying there spread out in three different ponds but all really the same pond, walking about the edge of it, waving back the gnats and things that flew in the air, and getting nearer and nearer the water the whole time the way people draw near to a fire, poking about the edge of it with sticks and throwing in pebbles and talking and pulling back the grasses and finally sitting down on their haunches beside it, still waving back the gnats, and looking in, and where they were looking there was a tiny current of water, a little fastrunning current in the sluggish water, that moved and carried with it other things than the things that were already in the pond like tiny pieces of orange peel and things that were only vaguely recognizable as what they were before; tiny pieces of rag and hair and this and that, hardly like the things that they were before but things that they were before just the same, curious and mysterious, floating by in the pond in the middle of the wood, floating and bobbling by in the scum in the fast moving current in the pond—all manner of things that one had not thought would be seen again when one had seen them for the last time—and Jan thought it not a very pleasant place but they went on sitting there, anyway, on their heels poking here and there with sticks and after a while Linda, poking in the current ahead of Jan, reached into the water and drew out on the end of her stick something that was long and flaccid and like a balloon and yet not, like a very dirty balloon covered with scum and bubbles and she lay it on the moss between them, lay it out away from the other things, and said to Jan, that is what love is all about, isn't it queer to think that is what love is all about? and Jan, looking at it and looking at Linda, looking at the things lying on the moss and looking at Linda in her crisp print dress, thought what a strange thing it was to see Linda in her fresh print

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dress poking about like that in the scum, poking about and pulling out a thing like that, and she looked at the thing and could make nothing of it and looked again and tried to put it together with the words Linda had said over it and tried to put the whole of it together with Linda, and just then they turned and saw Dicky was standing behind them watching them and listening to their conversation and Linda stood up and said, go back to the house this minute, Dicky, you know you aren't allowed to come down here, go back to the house right now or I'll tell mother to kiss you goodnight, and Dicky said, see if I care old crazy old lazy old Linda always poking about, but he went back to the house and Linda threw away her stick and told Jan that Doctor Beauford told his wife Elizabeth (Linda called Mrs. Beauford "Elizabeth") that she should not wear her brassiere too tight because it was bad for her and he always made her show him if it was too tight or not, and Jan said, Why what does it do to you? and Linda said, I don't know but it's a good thing to remember, all those things are good things to know, you know, and Jan who said she supposed so, though she did not really think so, thought instead of Dr. Beauford's wife whose name was Elizabeth standing on the front lawn under a tree wearing a brassiere.

When they came out of the duck forest the sun was not hot anymore and they went back to the house and made fudge in the kitchen and put salted nuts on the top of it the way they did in the stores and Jan licked the pan and Linda licked the beater and said, you're lucky to be allowed to do things like that, and Linda said, what is this funny word "allowed" you are always using? I'm allowed to do anything I want to do and Jan said, well if you're allowed to do anything you like why don't you? and Linda said, I do and Jan said, Linda Carter, you are the worst liar in the world and they began cutting the fudge in squares to put in the icebox to cool.

As the summer drew to a close and the time came near for Jan to go back to school, the girls spent more and more of their time in their place on the roof playing "Ah! Sweet

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Mystery of Life" and "The Bells of Saint Mary's" on the record player, talking and whispering and confessing, giggling and dreaming and conjecturing, wondering and wishing and waiting for they did not know what, they did not know whom.

Spend the night, Linda would say, come and sleep in the guest room, no one will care and we will sit in our place, and off they would go to scramble into their pyjamas and climb out onto the roof.

Oh it was lovely fun, planning and plotting and imagining, telling each other the future until two o'clock in the morning, falling asleep exhausted. I don't know what on earth you girls find to talk about until the middle of the night like that, Mrs. Carter would say, coming suddenly awake in her room and hearing the music and going into their room to see what in the world they could be doing up till two. I can't think what on earth you find to talk about, and they would promise to stop and go to sleep and she would go away and they would lower their voices and go on talking until they fell asleep talking, talking in their sleep.

In the day they forgot about it mostly and walked around the Circle and sang their popular songs and tried on Mrs. Carter's hats before the three way mirror and looked at magazines and swam and wrote to people for their autographs or tried to get the short wave on the radio. Sometimes Jan even stayed at home just doing nothing or making Christmas cards to send next year, but at night they had to be together out in the cool night air, their feet pulled up beneath them beside the record player.

Sometimes after they had played "Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life" three or four times in succession, Linda would turn it over on the other side and play the "Bells of St. Mary's." Just for a change, she would say, and she would set the needle in the groove and start it chiming out, chiming out its beautiful, mournful sound, round and round and she would listen, enthralled, imagining ancient walls of ivy and marvellous towers and over all, an incredible sort of peace with nuns inside walking two by two, encircled by the music of this record, and she would cry, oh Jan, how beautiful! But Jan could not seem to

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get into the mood. No matter how often they played that record over, she could not seem to get the right feeling from it, and so she went on talking about experiences she had had and ones she expected to have and it would be like it was when Linda and Jan first knew each other and Linda would say, oh how marvellous Jan, oh how wonderful, while Jan went talking on and on into the night hardly stopping for breath, oh how marvellous you are Jan, Linda would say, how lucky I am to know you, until suddenly Jan was cold and tired and felt like shivering.

Then Linda would say you're cold, let's go in, but Jan would say no I'm not cold, and if Linda went on saying, yes you are cold, let's go in, Jan would say, well you go in if you want to, I'm not cold and I'm going to stay out here, and so they would stay out there and after a while, looking at the stars, playing "Ah Sweet Mystery of Life," hugging their gowns around their knees, they would begin to talk again.

Sometimes after they started Jan would say, wait a minute and go in and get one of Linda's sweaters out of her closet and put it on and come back, but she would not let Linda go in to get it for her. Just a minute, she would say, I know exactly where it is, and she would go in and rummage around in Linda's closet feeling about in the dark among Linda's things not turning the light on. The light is just at the door, Linda would say, and Jan would say, I know, I *know*, but she would not turn it on. When she came back out she would as likely as not have come back with a bathing suit, or a flimsy thing for wearing in bed with a cold, or the top to an old gym suit, but no matter what it was Jan would put it on and get back into her place on the roof.

Oh you are a scream, Linda would cry, covering her mouth with her hand and laughing as Jan wrapped the thing about her, the old gym suit or whatever it was, oh Jan if you could see yourself!

Jan would say don't be silly, Linda, I took the first thing I laid my hand on, but in the end she would have to laugh too and they would have to start over again playing their record to get back into the mood.

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No more bells though, Jan would say, it makes me sick that thing, all that banging and moaning, I like "Sweet Mystery of Life" all right but the "Bells of St. Mary's" just bores me; look I have an idea, suppose we each give each other something that belongs to each other to keep forever like for instance I would give you my Indian ring and you could give me the little gold thimble you got in the wedding-cake. I saw it in your pin tray the other day, and when we are apart we could look at them and think of each other. Not that I wouldn't think of you anyway but I could look at it and think when it was in your pin tray.

Marvellous, said Linda, but you don't have to give me your Indian pin, just anything, or nothing. I'm dying to give you the silly thimble—I didn't dream you'd have it even—but I don't want to take your Indian pin.

In the end Jan took the thimble and wore it everywhere on a string until she lost it down a crack in the floor and found it and relost it and refound it and finally didn't know where it was, but Linda put the pin in a box in her jewel case and kept it always and never wore it because it reminded her too much of Jan and that summer long ago.

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A MODERN HIGHWAY LINKS BATHSHEBA AND SODOM

Salt pillars are no obstacle and we
look forward on remorse. The present rain
of fire is man-made, and from a deader sea
the tourists slouch towards cities of the plain.
From their hotel, each hour, buses leave
for Sodom; pets are allowed, but sodomy
is difficult in the devouring sun.
And yet, you ask us to believe
that our driver saw the head of John
proclaiming night with his uprooted tongue?

In all these lands, and from Damascus south,
the demonologies get out of hand;
odd shadows streak across the noon-time sand
and Revelation wears a lion's mouth.

—F. George Steiner

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SUE KAUFMAN

TEA AT LE GORD

WHERE woods and wall began, she got off the bicycle and wheeled it the rest of the way up the hill, glancing uneasily at the wall. Higher than a man, it was topped by jagged triangles of glass—a clear statement that the De Rogiets had no use for intruders. The gate at the hill's crest was made of barred iron and a printed plaque just above the handle proclaimed: "*Le Gord. Chien Méchant.*"

Madelaine hesitated, looking wistfully back at the Cathedral which sat like a tiny spired crown in the distance. It was much farther out than she'd imagined, and now the sign warned of this fierce dog. She wondered why Mrs. Talbott hadn't mentioned the dog, although she knew she was being childish to worry about it. She pulled the little gold bell-chain on the gate.

Entering, she stood still and blinked at the sudden change of light. The ringing of the bell had carried far, for at the end of the densely wooded path she heard the ominous baying of three or four dogs, not of just one as the sign had indicated. She feared dogs, even the pawky little poodles her mother affected, so she waited and stared anxiously at the foliage about her. When she decided they were penned in or tied up, she proceeded along the cinder path until she emerged into brilliant sunlight.

It was a steeply-built house, trimmed with intricate cuttings and shutters of wood, more a Hansel-and-Gretel cottage or a postcard Swiss chalet than the "little chateau" Mrs. Talbott had described. The lawn was dry, rankly weeded, running to the wooded park inside the gate.

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A redheaded girl stood on the wide porch that ran around the first floor of the house, holding back a struggling dog. She called: "*Attention*!" warningly, and Madelaine's flesh prickled as she glimpsed a snarling mouth, straining haunches, as she turned and saw two more big dogs clawing fiercely at the wire of a steel-netted enclosure by the house. She could not tell what kind of dogs they were, but they seemed some species of Great Dane, with pale brindled coats and dark muzzles. Probably they were not always penned in. If she were to obtain a pension here, how could she come and go with ease, when she would even be afraid to come in alone from the gate?

The girl chained the dog to the newel-post and came down the steps, her homely face breaking wide with a smile. "Mademoiselle Barker?"

"Yes," answered Madelaine, still eyeing the dog. "Is Madame De Rogiet at home, please?"

"She has been in town since the morning, Mademoiselle, but she expected your visit and will be home soon. She rode in with Monsieur on the 'jeep' to pass the morning at her mother-in-law's house, but she must come back for tea, for that is when she feeds the dogs." The girl blinked shyly at Madelaine, her pale-lashed green eyes darting enviously over her clothes.

For tea. Madelaine looked at her watch. She was tired and hot and thirsty from her ride. She was about to ask if she might go inside and wait in the shade for Madame De Rogiet when two little boys of five and six years suddenly appeared in the flamboyant arch of the front door, where they clung to the doorknob and goggled at Madelaine with round, weak pale blue eyes. The delicacy of their limbs made them seem miniature children, and their faces were blanched in shadowed pallor, marks of malnutrition. Without taking their eyes from her face, they moved leggily out onto the sunny porch, avoiding the chained dog and jostling each other for moral support until they had gotten down the steps and reached the security of the maid's skirts, where each grabbed a handful of calico. "Marie? Marie-Paul?" they

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bleated in unison into the flowered material, "*Marie-Paul, qui est cette demoiselle*?" They had half-singing, half-crying voices and in their open mouths the little pointed teeth were bluish.

The girl put a hand on top of each dark head. "*C'est une demoiselle américaine. Alors... silence*!"

"Perhaps I ought to go away and come back later," said Madelaine. The children, like the dogs, were something else Mrs. Talbott hadn't mentioned.

"Oh no, Mademoiselle," said Marie-Paul, "Madame distinctly told me to ask that you wait. Perhaps you wish some water? It is a long ride from Chartres on such a day."

Madelaine said she would very much like some water, so the girl, giving the dog ample berth, led her back along the porch to the kitchen, the two little boys stumbling along at her side, peering back owl-eyed at Madelaine.

The kitchen looked like a Vermeer interior gone to seed. A resinous smell hung in the air, the black and white checkered floor was covered with footmarks. Flies buzzed and settled everywhere, drowning on the gummy surface of cream bowls lined up for boiling, slipping down inside the necks of green bottles holding milk. Marie-Paul opened the rheumy icebox and poured Madelaine some water. As she drank it the two children watched her with blinking round eyes, and when she put down the glass and smiled at them they became convulsed in a paroxysm of shy delight, doubling over to giggle shrilly.

"What are their names?" she asked.

"Philippe and Charles. They are *très gentils*. But very nervous: they tremble so when they drink their soup, they spill it all over themselves. I think perhaps it is because their mother is not with them often." Marie-Paul looked with troubled eyes at the two boys, then turned a deep and lucid gaze on Madelaine, making her feel that though they were total strangers there was between them a bond of communication that could be depended on. Madelaine felt that a hand had been mutely outstretched, and she shivered at the empty dankness of this house where the past lay like frayed tapestry on the wall...

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Outside the dogs began to trumpet joyously. The two little boys pressed into a corner, startled into silence.

"That will be Madame De Rogiet," said Marie-Paul, quickly taking Madelaine's arm and leading her out of the kitchen through a dark hallway to the front door. "Madame would be angry to think I had invited a guest to the kitchen."

Madame De Rogiet was kneeling on the top step of the porch, making crooning, loving noises to the chained dog. As soon as Madelaine appeared, the dog stood up under her caresses and began to growl. Giving the dog a mock admonishing tap, the woman smiled, and with an arching forward of the neck, a dip of the head, she moved down the porch holding forth a long thin hand. Her face was narrow, hollowed under cheekbones and eyes, the nose reaching out from between deepset brown eyes. Her only beauty was a perfect transparent wax-colored skin and winging dark oval eyebrows. She gripped Madelaine's hand with slender tensile fingers: "I hope you have not been waiting long... Mademoiselle... Mademoiselle Bar-kair."

Madelaine assured her she had not.

"I am sorry that I did not give you a ride out, but there were visitors at my belle-mère's house It is so seldom that one sees old friends these days, I did not want to set a limit on the time." She shrugged and smiled without any trace of warmth, tweaking pale wisps of brown hair into a paisley scarf knotted about her head, looking carefully at Madelaine. "I can see that you are tired from your long ride. We will go inside where it is cooler and we can talk."

"How wonderful to have a car," said Madelaine, following the slight figure into the dim cool house.

"Car? No. It is a 'jeep'," laughed the woman as though she had made a successful joke. Madelaine smiled politely. She was acutely ill at ease, sensing measuring glances at her person, her clothes, sensing more veiled laughter. She was wearing an outfit her mother had selected for her at Best's: a striped chambray dress (her mother said stripes were thinning), a cardigan about her shoulders. She looked completely American, from the gold barette holding back one

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side of her well-brushed blond hair to the tips of her seasoned moccasins. Did she look funny? Was she in some way funny like the 'jeep?' Judging from the smile on the woman's face, it would seem so.

"How long have you been in Chartres, Mademoiselle?"

"A little over two weeks."

"And you were pensioned with another family then?"

"The Villets. They live down in the *Vieille Ville* back of the cathedral."

"Villets?... Villets, Villets? They are the butchers?"

"No, there are *two* Villets, Madame. This one is the Contractor. Monsieur is very tall, greyhaired... almost white. Wears heavy glasses?"

"I am afraid I do not know the Villets," said Madame De Rogiet coldly. "So. You stayed with the Villets two weeks, and now you are searching a new pension?"

"It isn't because I didn't like them," Madelaine explained hastily, feeling that somehow she was betraying the other kind family, "but it was awfully crowded. The house is very small and they're quite a big family. Even though I was paying them, I felt that I was in the way."

"You paid the Villets?"

"Of course," said Madelaine faintly.

"*Combien*?" asked the woman, lapsing into the discretion of French.

"Five-hundred francs a day."

Madame De Rogiet leaned back, her face assuming a somnolent, pearly look. "And did your Madame Talcott tell you how much we wish for a pension at *Le Gord*?"

"No, Madame, Mrs. *Talbott* didn't," said Madelaine, annoyed that the woman could not remember the name of her study-group leader. "She said that she thought it was important for us to meet. She assumed we would discuss prices later."

The woman smiled. "We are asking eight hundred francs a day, Mademoiselle."

Madelaine sat up straight. "Oh! But Mrs. Talbott gave me no idea there would be any change in the price of the

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pensions." Confused and embarrassed, she decided to tell the truth at once. "You see, Madame, each individual in our group was told to bring a certain amount of money to France. It was all worked out very carefully in advance, and there was to be just so much allotted for pensions each week. Of course our parents provided for a little spending money, but that was to be saved for the gifts we might buy in Paris at the end of the summer."

Madame De Rogiet laughed. "Ah, I can see your mother appreciates Parisian chic!"

"Mother has wonderful taste," said Madelaine. "She's an editor on one of the biggest fashion magazines in the States."

The woman appeared not to have heard. She said almost indolently: "But surely, Mademoiselle, with the rate-of-exchange being what it is, being completely to the advantage of Americans..." She sighed, shrugged and rose to straighten a little mahogany pipestand on the desk. "My husband and I have always liked Americans. We wish to travel there someday... my husband has a distant cousin in Boston, a cousin on his maternal side. We have seen so many Americans in Chartres this summer, and we watch them all with interest. We have been watching your group for weeks now. You see, my husband's mother lives in the *Rue de la Cygne*, right by the cathedral. Each morning I go there and see you all in front of the cathedral with your pads and pencils. You seem such a handsome, energetic group. We thought it would be charming to have one of you live with us..."

Madelaine could see the others in the group as the woman had, peeping out from behind lace curtains at the *Rue de la Cygne*: the pretty girls (who might well have been picked for their looks rather than an interest in Gothic Art) tanned and slender in their Bermuda shorts and shirts, smiling as they emerged from the dark cathedral into the noon sun. Yes, it would be *charming* to have one of those other girls as a guest at *Le Gord*. Wretchedly she remembered one of the first mornings at the cathedral when an old guide in the black robes of the church had taken them up to the triforium gallery, proud and eager to show such treasures to *les Américains*, who

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must surely have a great love and understanding of such things if they had come such a long, long way to see them. The girls and boys in the group had whispered, nudged and laughed above the droning voice of the poor old *corbeau*, making it impossible for Madelaine, who was one of the last in line, to hear what he was saying about the stained glass transept windows.

The silence was broken by the sudden gusty bang of a door upstairs, followed by running tiny bare feet, then fretful crying, long drawn-out sobs, hiccoughs, whines. Madelaine, her heart beating, stared hard at the Frenchwoman but saw nothing on the smooth pale face to indicate she had heard her sons. Then Marie-Paul came chinking down the stairs bearing a tray with two half-finished bowls of milk sliding back and forth, boiling skims still sticking to the sides of the bowls. Relieved to see her, Madelaine smiled warmly, but the green eyes were blank, the freckled face closed.

Disheartened, Madelaine surveyed the room as though hoping to find a conversational subject in the *faience* plates on the wall, in the leather-bound volumes of De Musset and Lamartine in the bookcase. One wall was completely covered with photographs of large, fierce, beautiful dogs like the ones outside. Nailed to most of the frames were blue cockades, *Grand Prix* gold stencilled on their fat satin hearts.

Then Madelaine looked at the ceiling, a ruin of peeling cracks and oily stains.

"Ah you must not look at that!" protested Madame De Rogiet. Until now she had been proudly watching Madelaine's reaction to her possessions. "That happened during the war when the Germans were in this house. They used it as their headquarters so that all the officers came here to have their parties, to make it a club. They took all our beautiful rugs, heirlooms that had been in our family for centuries. To say nothing of our wines. My husband was inconsolable."

"But... judging from what the Villets told me, you were *lucky*, Madame! Lucky they didn't burn the house. Weren't you afraid?" Seven years, she thought, seven long years

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since all that has been over, done and almost forgotten by some, and still they have not tried to repair the ceiling.

"I was not afraid because I was not here," Madame De Rogiet explained with almost insulting patience. "We were at my mother's house, near Dreux. We were safe. My husband came back to Chartres one day to see how the house was faring and managed to talk with the officer in charge. This German was truly an educated man and he loved dogs, too. My husband showed him the trophies we had received for breeding our *caniches*, and the officer, at the end of the afternoon, promised my husband that the house would be protected. He was a *bonhomme*. They were not all beasts, you know. And though he could do little to prevent the parties where they drank up all the wines in our cellar and ruined our ceiling," she pointed to the oily stain, "he kept his word of honor—a true officer and a gentleman."

Madelaine heard the word 'gentleman' and shuddered. In the quiet she fancied she could hear heavy boots thumping up and down the thin wooden stairs, voices calling out gutterally in the echoing rooms, metallic equipage scraping against pink plaster walls. How silent the house must have fallen after their surrender, damp, soiled, deserted, full of uncertain sounds...

"We will have tea," said Madame De Rogiet, rising. "And then I will show you the grounds. You will see something of what it was when it belonged to my husband's father." She smiled vacantly, talking more to herself than to Madelaine. "In those days it was only used as a summer home, and in the fall, as a hunting lodge for the *chasse*, when everyone would come out in carriages from Paris. I will show you where the old stables and kennels for the hounds once stood. It will be a pleasure to show you these things, because I am certain you have little chance to see such things *chez Villet*."

After tea they began a tour of the house. On the second floor, Madelaine heard the light, chanting voice of one of the

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little boys, talking to himself behind a heavy door. Madame De Rogiet hurried her to the third floor, where they entered a wide sloping-ceilinged room with a shuttered window. In the dim light, Madelaine could see that the wallpaper was in tatters.

"This is the room available for a pension," said the woman as she flung the leaves of the shutters wide, letting in late afternoon sunlight. "It was my husband's room when he was a boy. The pattern of the paper, as you can see, is the noble *fleur de lis*." She pointed to an intact section of the wallpaper. Madelaine half-expected her to begin a recitation of her husband's lineage, beginning perhaps with the Duc de Berry and working up to the present.

"See the view," said Madame De Rogiet, gesturing imperiously.

Madelaine looked. Over the tops of dipping trees, the distant cathedral spires were blue and gold in the late light. "We once had a house in the country," she said, the words slipping out before she knew why she'd uttered them.

"You have a large house in America?"

"Oh no. Not now. But when I was very small and my father was alive, we had a big house in Pennsylvania." She took a deep breath. "Mother and I have an apartment now."

"And your mother?... She works on a magazine?"

"That's right," said Madelaine, quietly yet almost belligerently.

"And you, Mademoiselle, are studying to be an artist?"

"No. I'm an Art major in college. I study painting and its history, but don't do any painting. I don't know yet what I will do."

Madame De Rogiet smiled, and in that moment Madelaine knew she almost hated her. The lilting unequal cadence of the woman's phrasing was an affectation, and the mannered vocabulary of shrugs, moues, dips of the head, articulations of long pointed fingers, seemed graceless to her, without point of reference in her own experience. It was a Gothic sort of elegance, once precious, but now unbeautiful, like the

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highwaisted tubular women who advanced in procession, abdomen first, trains over arm, across the miniatures of Van Eyck.

Madame De Rogiet looked at her watch. "Time to feed my beauties!"

Madelaine had little choice but to follow her downstairs and wait as Madame De Rogiet went into the kitchen and returned with two huge pails of a yellowish stew. She hung back as the woman unchained the dog on the porch, but it ignored her as it caught the scent of the food in the pail. With the dog eagerly panting at her side, the woman went to the high-wired enclosure, unlocked the door and entered, calling out lovingly to the fawning, ravenous dogs inside. "Micelle, Gruette, Mélusine," she crooned, laying light fingers on their veined necks, calling them well-mannered beauties, highborn ladies, waiting so patiently for their food. But as the gluey mash was poured into their bowls, manners disappeared, and the snapping jaws, heaving ribcages and tensely rooted haunches brought out a rash of prickles along Madelaine's spine. Perhaps she could leave now while they were so busy.

But after interminable singing: "How hungry they are! How starved my little babies are today!" Madame De Rogiet picked up the empty pails and rehooked the door as she came out. "When we return from our tour of the gardens we will let them out for some exercise. Then you shall see how sweet and gentle they are!" She smiled. "You must not be so frightened, Mademoiselle, for they would not harm a child. One must be educated out of fears such as yours." She swung the empty pails at her side, bending her slender body forward. "You shall see how sleek and glossy their coats are. From eating only the best, you understand —raw meat and eggs—their coats shine like polished brass."

"Perhaps some other time..." began Madelaine, but the woman was already up on the porch, putting the emptied pails back in the kitchen.

They began their tour by crossing the lawn and entering the park inside the wall. Silently they walked in piney

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shadows until a sharp turn where they entered a long spanning arch of trees, a natural Gothic arch.

"This is exactly as it was when Monsieur le Comte of three generations past owned it. Only the arch has grown higher. Our rose arbors, our gardens in the English manner, our tennis lawns are gone, and there is no longer the will nor the money to restore them. But this is as it was."

And gesturing dramatically, she led Madelaine in proud, stately procession to the center of the mossy arcade, where the light filtered down through foliage as through the triforium gallery in Chartres Cathedral, making crisscross patterns on the grass. In the center, another spanning arch of trees crossed at a right angle, a squaring transept. They paused. Madelaine stared.

"Now for the gardens," Madame De Rogiet said, hurrying Madelaine along until they reached a clearing where sparse cornstalks, cabbages and carrots grew in confusion. Then on to an old mill where dust seeped quietly from a beamed ceiling, then to the spot where the rose arbor had been, growing in fine disorder over latticed wood, like the gardens of Madame Pompadour in Boucher.

When finally they returned to the house, Marie-Paul was just disappearing in the door, Philippe and Charles each attached to an apron string. Madelaine knew she must tell Madame De Rogiet her decision.

"Madame... it's very late and I'm afraid I've already taken too much of your time..."

"But not at all, Mademoiselle! It is a pleasure to see someone appreciate fine things." Searching Madelaine's troubled face, she seemed to read her thoughts: "If as you explained earlier, you feel that you cannot afford a pension with us, I understand. On the other hand, I am sorry *we* cannot be more accomodating."

"Oh, I wouldn't dream of asking that, Madame! But you see, as I said, I did promise to do some shopping for mother in Paris... some perfume... some gloves..."

"I quite understand. Then, I did not mention this, but I see you are an intelligent girl and will not take offense: I did

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not reckon with the children. I saw that they were unusually upset this afternoon and could only conclude that it was the presence of a stranger under their roof, a stranger speaking an alien tongue, which upset them. They are such *delicate* children, susceptible to any influence—even my beautiful darlings upset them." She pointed to the dogs in the wire enclosure. "I think it would be best for everyone concerned if we considered the pension a closed matter."

"Yes," said Madelaine, hating the woman, for the children had *liked* her.

"I will walk you to the gate, Mademoiselle. But first you must meet my ladies. We have been impolite to them, you have not given them a chance."

Madelaine saw no way of refusing. She let herself be led to the enclosure, where Madame De Rogiet opened the door. Only two of the dogs came out, working velvety black muzzles against Madelaine's bare legs, snuffling inquisitively. She remembered an incident in her childhood, when she had run, run across a wide lawn away from a collie charging after her. Her father, who had been there to catch the dog before it caught her, had first soothed her, then patiently explained that she must never show a dog that she feared him, for he would recognize it, smell it and act upon it. Now she moved edgewise away from Madame De Rogiet's 'ladies,' her body agued with a cold sweat. Stupidly she looked down at their ribs, the bones of their long backs under the shining brindled coats, and with great effort declared: "They are very beautiful, Madame." She understood that she was undergoing some sort of trial and childishly tried to flatter her judge. Somehow she began the interminable distance to the gate.

Madame De Rogiet moved easily with her, a hand in each dog's collar, and looked critically down at them. "Yes, they are truly beautiful. Perhaps a little *maigre*, but then it is an aristocratic trait. Noble thinness is always becoming." She shrugged her mobile, bony shoulders.

Under the last arch of trees they stopped for a moment, and the dogs pricked up their tulip-shaped ears, moaning in their bulging throats. Madame De Rogiet gave her a last appraising

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measure of a look and for an instant let go one of the dog's collars, thrusting out her hand as she had done in greeting. The released dog started forward, baring yellow teeth. Then Madame De Rogiet said with half-closed eyes : "*Au revoir, Mademoiselle,* it was a most enjoyable afternoon with you." She clucked chidingly at the free dog, who stopped growling but did not take its eyes from Madelaine. "You must come and see us again before your departure from Chartres."

Madelaine blinked rapidly, saying yes, she would love to come again. "It was a privilege to be here," she concluded, relaxing a little as she saw the woman slide her hand back through the dog's collar. When she was sure the slender fingers had a firm grasp on the leather, she turned her back and strolled with great effort across the small space to the gate, her feet slipping in the moccasins. She turned the gate handle, calling out a final farewell, her voice ringing falsely hearty, her eyes so moist with fear and rage they did not see the snapping release of the long pale fingers. She slipped out the gate, crashing the grillwork door behind her. The bell on the top pealed ceaselessly, trembling.

But in the seconds it took her to reach her bicycle, the dogs were already rattling against the door as they tried first to hurtle it, barking, then snarling as they worked themselves up to a frenzy of howling disappointment. And Madelaine knew that they had been discharged after her retreating back, that Madame De Rogiet, still cool, still smiling, had let them loose before the final clicking of the lock upon the gate.

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THREE POEMS BY THOM GUNN

THE WOUND

The huge wound in my head began to heal
About the beginning of the seventh week.
Its valleys darkened, its villages became still:
For joy I did not move and dared not speak,
Not doctors would cure it, but time, its patient skill.

And constantly my mind returned to Troy.
After I sailed the seas I fought in turn
On both sides, sharing even Helen's joy
Of place and growing up—to see Troy burn—
As Neoptolemus, that stubborn boy.

I lay and rested as prescription said.
Manœuvered with the Greeks, or sallied out
Each day with Hector. Finally my bed
Became Achilles' tent, to which the lout
Thersites came reporting numbers dead.

I was my self: subject to no man's breath:
My own commander was my enemy.
And while my belt hung up, sword in the sheath,
Thersites shambled in and breathlessly
Cackled about my friend Patroclus' death.

I called for armour, rose, and did not reel.
But, when I thought, rage at his noble pain
Flew to my head, and turning I could feel
My wound break open wide. Over again
I had to let those storm-lit valleys heal.

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INCIDENT ON A JOURNEY

One night I reached a cave: I slept, my head
Full of the air. There came about daybreak
A red-coat soldier to the mouth who said
"I am not living, in hell's pains I ache,
But I regret nothing."

His forehead had a bloody wound whose streaming
The pallid staring face illuminated.
Whether his words were mine or his, in dreaming
I found they were my deepest thoughts translated.
"*I regret nothing*:

"Turn your closed eyes to see upon these walls
A mural scratched there by an earlier man,
And coloured with the blood of animals:
Showing humanity beyond its span,
Regretting nothing.

"No plausible nostalgia, no brown shame
I had when treating with my enemies.
And always when a living impulse came
I acted, and my action made me wise.
And I regretted nothing.

"I as possessor of unnatural strength
Was hunted, one day netted in a brawl;
A minute far beyond a minute's length
Took from me passion, strength, and life, and all.
But I regretted nothing.

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"Their triumph left my body in the dust;
The dust and beer still clotting in my hair
When I rise lonely, will-less. Where I must
I go, and what I must I bear.
And I regret nothing.

"My lust runs yet and is unsatisfied,
My hate throbs yet but I am feeble-limbed;
If as an animal I could have died
My death had scattered instinct to the wind,
Regrets as nothing."

Later I woke. I started to my feet.
The valley light, the mist already going.
I was alive and felt my body sweet,
Uncaked blood in all its channels flowing.
I would regret nothing.

LOFTY IN THE PALAIS DE DANSE

You are not random picked. I tell you you
Are much like one I knew before, that died.
Shall we sit down, and drink and munch a while
—I want to see if you will really do:
If not we'll get it over now outside.
Wary I wait for one unusual smile.

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I never felt this restiveness with her:
I lay calm wanting nothing but what I had.
And now I stand each night outside the Mills
For girls, to shift them to the cinema
Or dance hall... Like the world, I've gone to bad.
A deadly world: for once I like, it kills.

The same with everything: the only posting
I ever liked, was short. And so in me
I kill the easy things that others like
To teach them that no liking can be lasting:
All that you praise I take, what modesty
What gentleness, you ruin while you speak.

And partly that I couldn't if I would
Be bed-content with likenesses so dumb.
Passed in the street, they seem identical
To her original, yet understood
Exhaustively as soon as slept with, some
Lack this, some that, and none like her at all.

You praise my strength. The muscle on my arm.
Yes. Now the other. Yes, about the same.
I've got another muscle you can feel.
Dare say you knew. Only expected harm
Falls from a khaki man. That's why you came
With me and when I go you follow still.

Now that we sway here in the shadowed street
Why can't I keep my mind clenched on the job?
Your body is a good one, not without
Earlier performance, but in this repeat
The pictures are unwilled that I see bob
Out of the dark, and you can't turn them out.

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DONALD WINDHAM

ROME

ROME is the middle section of a three part story, titled Fichi d'India, *set in Florence, Rome and Sicily, about an American composer who goes to Italy to compose an opera based on Hawthorne's* The Marble Faun.

IN the late afternoon the Roman streets which have been deserted since lunch time suddenly fill with people dressed in brilliant colors. The sun, a dull red ball, sinks over St. Peters, filtering red smoky light through the streets. The cobblestones are packed with slowwalking crowds ignoring the automobiles, Vespas and bicycles, filling the air with their voices and gesticulations and creating the excitement of a warm Christmas eve. At seven the first lights start twinkling.

Stateley's arrival in Rome in the daylight upheld his expectations. The approach by train to almost all cities shows them at their ugliest; but the rail approach to Rome from the North is through a circle of green pastoral hills. Twice and then again, ancient walls and arches break the sward; then a minimum of ugly houserears pass and suddenly the station appears. Yet, despite the beauty of this approach, Stateley's feeling on arrival was that the possibilities of Rome would increase rather than dwindle as he stayed there.

He moved into a hotel on the Via Bocca di Leone which friends had recommended and found himself in the center of

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a Roman colony of Americans. But the colony was different from the one he had known in Paris. In Paris everyone lived in remote rooms and met at the same restaurants and bars; here, as soon as he walked into the lobby of the hotel he saw half a dozen people whom he knew from New York.

Stateley followed his baggage to his room, washed, came down again and joined some of his acquaintances for supper. They were acquaintances rather than friends, for although he knew who they were and what they did he could not have guessed the details of their lives. Still, he was surprised at supper by the difference of the atmosphere among them from that he had known among his friends in Paris. In Paris everyone had behaved as on a deliberate holiday and had displayed eccentricities like party dress. Here, everyone seemed leading a pedestrianly ordinary life. The casual intimacy which is bred between people away from home was touched among them with an air of indifference. They appeared to eat together because they did not want to eat alone, but Stateley had the impression that each one of them had accepted being alone in the world, and that any one of them would have considered as naive an offer of real friendship.

At the table were a girl photographer from a fashion magazine, a writer, an ex-dancer and his wife, a painter and several other people more identifiable by their aimlessness in life than by the labels they had chosen to give their aimlessness. When the meal was over they went together to the bar on the corner and drank a coffee, standing at the small marble counter. Then it was taken for granted that they would part and each go his own way, as though they were people who worked in the same neighborhood and met for lunch. How each one could have a self-sufficient center to his life in so transient an existence, Stateley did not understand. But he was too exhausted to question his ignorance. He returned to the hotel and soon, despite the step and scrape of feet passing along the pavement beneath his window, he was asleep.

The next afternoon, in his conservative way, Stateley ate in the restaurant again. The group was there, with some

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missing, some added, and again, when the meal was finished and they had drunk coffee together at the corner bar, each of the group disappeared into his private drama and Stateley found himself alone. But he did not mind. He was serious about his plans for seeing the city and he could do that best by himself. That afternoon he visited the Capitoline museum. The next he saw St. Peters. And the next he rode through sloping green fields, speckled with dark red poppies and yellow daisies, to the beach at Ostia. But long before he had exhausted the conventional places of interest his own interest had centered in the city itself, the streets and the claycolored houses where roosters, living on terraces or balconies, crowed at noon or any other hour, as though time had no meaning, and where at night, beneath the zigzag of blue sky, above the cobblestones, the people, although not so polite as in Florence, were more intimate. From the base of Hilda's tower he picked a three leaf clover to remind him of the wonder of the commonplace in Rome.

The satisfaction which the Romans found in the obvious seemed to Stateley like the birth of poetry. One evening he stopped by some workmen in the street.

— What are they doing? he asked a man.

— Working on the street.

— But why do they work at night?

— Because they are the night workmen.

Nothing special happened on his walks, yet each event was an adventure. One afternoon, back of the Piazza Colonna, toward the Tiber, he joined one of the crowds which stand about in every street, all day, every day, doing nothing, and watched workmen unloading sacks of flour from a cart and carrying them into a bakery. When Stateley continued on his way he found himself accompanied by a boy who had also been watching.

He had been more or less aware of the boy from the beginning. Among the crowd, and dressed not too differently from the business men of whom it was largely composed, the boy stood out. He wore a suit coat draped over his shoulders,

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as warm as the day was, and an unmatching pair of pants. One of his knees was bent and his back was curved in a graceful slouch; but at the same time his shoulders and head were held erect with an almost arrogant assurance. From where he stood Stateley could not see the boy's face, only the black shelf of hair above the terracotta column of neck.

This Greek vase contrast of colors, the glazed black of hair against the bright terracotta of skin, had become the key of the attraction which Stateley found in the Roman streets, and it was the peculiar lack of these colors which had drawn his attention to the men unloading the flour. Each of the workmen wore a pastel handkerchief tied over his hair, and their white undershirts did not stand out with the usual glare against their sunburned chests for the flour from the sacks had seeped out and dulled their skins as completely as it had dulled the designs painted on the cart.

And then, suddenly, as Stateley stood watching, brilliant terracotta flowers began to bloom on the dusty fields of the workmen's arms and shoulders. Their blossoms appeared to be miraculous. Stateley first saw one on the wide back of a workman's hand where his hand was raised to hold the sack on his shoulder. Then another appeared on his forearm. Another on the broad terrace of his biceps. And then Stateley felt a drop of moisture on his own arm and realized that without the force of the sun having at all diminished, large and separate drops of rain had begun to fall. There were flowers all over the flesh of the workmen where the raindrops had wet their skins, and the crowd of onlookers were turning toward the shelter of doorways. Stateley turned with them and as he turned he caught sight of the boy's face. The boy was watching him, looking straight into his eyes.

The crowd moved leisurely out of the street, the workmen continued to unload the cart, and Stateley, not yet used to the fact that everyone stares at everyone else in Italy, dropped his eyes as he ran for a doorway. When he had reached shelter he raised his eyes to look again at the group of men among whom he had seen the boy, and although every one of

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the men was more or less in the place he had been before, the boy had vanished.

Stateley was as surprised as though he had looked into a familiar mirror and failed to see his image. He searched among the men for a full minute, sure that his eyes were deceiving him. But the boy was not there to be seen. Then, as the rain had stopped as suddenly as it had begun, he stepped out into the street and continued on his way.

The boy's face had not been particularly striking or handsome; only the look of intent recognition in it had interested Stateley, and as he walked away he was not so much disappointed as nonplussed. He gave one last backward look, shrugged his shoulders, and started down the street. As he walked he took out a package of cigarettes and a package of matches. He stopped to light a cigarette. As he stopped someone came to a halt beside him and Stateley, looking sideways, was startled to see that it was the boy. In one hand, raised before his face, the boy held a cigarette, and very politely he asked for a light.

For some reason Stateley did not think that the boy's attitude was friendly, and he complied with the request without speaking, simply holding out his still burning match. But as soon as his cigarette was lighted, the boy's eyes grew larger, his lips widened about the white center of a smile as joyous as though he had been recognised by an old friend whom he had feared had forgotten him, and there was no mistaking the friendliness with which he said:

— Thank you.

— You're welcome, Stateley replied feeling self-conscious and pleased at the same time.

— Are you Roman? the boy asked as they began to walk side by side.

— No, I'm American. You are Roman.

— No, I am Tuscan, the boy said. I am only in Rome for a few days.

They were at the end of the street and it was necessary to turn in one direction or the other.

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— Where are you going? Stateley asked as he stopped.

— I do not know. I had an appointment with a friend here.

The boy looked about as though he expected to see someone he knew; but there was no one, only a grey cat which ran out of a shop entrance, chased by invisible pursuers, across the cobblestones and into a hallway.

— Shall we walk in this direction? he asked.

As they walked up the street toward the river the boy told Staletey that his name was Benito. Stateley was self-conscious, and he was not sure why. Perhaps, he told himself, it was because of the way in which he had first seen the boy looking at him. But he knew that it was more than that. The conversation among the people with whom he ate, although it covered most of Rome, centered on the Via Veneto and the Piazza Colonna and the men and women whom his acquaintances picked up in these two places. Day after day at lunch he heard these Italians referred to as though they were inanimate objects, inexpensive *objets d'art* to be bought and paid for without consideration of them as human beings with feelings of their own, and although while listening to his acquaintances' conversations in the restaurant Stateley had felt separate and virtuous, here, talking with an Italian for the first time, he felt that no matter what he did he shared their guilt.

Stateley was neither puritanical nor naive. In a way he considered all people to be as good as he was and to be free to do as they pleased. He believed, that is, in an equality of being. But at the same time he did not believe that people could be judged except by their actions, and he did not approve of all possible actions, certainly not all actions of the American he knew in Rome. His disapproval did not spring from a conventional morality, it sprang from his new private morality and the distaste with which this made him look upon any squandering of energy upon ends which were temporary and mundane. He wanted to judge actions by their ultimate worth, and the daily actions of these people seemed to him to

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have no worth at all. Of love, of any kind, he did not disapprove; he knew that the difficulties of realizing love create its value. But a promiscuity uncontrolled by even the ordinary restraints of convention struck him as endlessly dissipating for all parties concerned. No good could come of the callous way in which the people he knew treated the Romans. With Benito he felt in a false position, and as a result he spoke with an almost tea-party politeness.

He asked Benito where his family lived and if he were in Rome alone. Benito replied that he had been born in Arezzo and still thought of it as his home, but that all of his family had been killed in the war and that he was alone, not only in Rome but in the world.

The politeness of Benito's replies echoed the politeness of Stateley's inquiries as though he never spoke in any other way. He was openly and blandly sincere, and he stated the most diverse facts in the same tone. He pointed out to Stateley the bathing boats on the Tiber and they went together into Castel Sant'Angelo. He told Stateley that the Roman policemen were tall because the true Romans are tall; the short Italians are all Neapolitans and Sicilians. The old women whom they saw leaning out of the windows of houses lean out because they need more air than young people and suffocate if they stay in the backs of rooms. The name of the plants along the river was trees. What kind of trees? Oh, that he did not know. Only trees.

By suppertime Stateley was enjoying himself so much that he decided not to return to the restaurant near the hotel and he asked Benito to eat with him. They dined in a small restaurant behind the Piazza Argentina, even cheaper than that to which Stateley usually went. After supper they returned together toward Stateley's hotel, for Benito said that he had no place to go and would walk with him. In the street before the hotel Benito took a long time to say goodnight, and finally he asked Stateley to give him some money. A blush of the same self-consciousness which he had felt in the afternoon swept over Stateley, but after thinking for a moment he gave

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Benito the sum he had asked for. It was not much, about what their dinners had cost, and Benito was probably telling the truth when he said that he had no place to stay the night. Just why he should be the one to pay for Benito's lodging Stateley could not satisfactorily reason. But when he had said goodnight and gone up to his room he was happy about what he had done.

The next day he was away from the hotel all morning in the Villa Borghese where the first act of his opera was to be set. He ate lunch in a restaurant off the Via Veneto, then returned to the Villa Borghese and, caught in his usual trap of watching, spent the afternoon in the Giardino del Lago, a garden within the garden, the secret heart of a garden. Boats were for hire on the lake, boys and girls rowed in them, and children stood against the rail around the water and threw bits of bread to the fishes. The small black shapes would worry the bits of bread down into the water until a sudden flash of gold, a larger fish, would scatter them for a moment. Then the black shapes would converge again. The children seemed especially beautiful and quiet and well mannered in the garden, and a select few heroic soldiers and sailors leaned against the rail among them, looking in the opposite direction from the lake, toward the paths and the Punch and Judy show. Stateley remained in the garden until dusk. Then, when he was too exhausted to remain any longer, he crossed to the Pincio, above the Via Margutta's catcurled courts and catcrept tiles and descended the Spanish Steps into the excitement of the city.

He ate in the usual restaurant. When he finished he found himself leaving with a man named Wild, a retired army officer, whom he had met for the first time that evening. Wild was just as interesting as the other habitues of the restaurant and he struck Stateley as much more respectable. He lived in an apartment and had been in Rome since the end of the war.

— Would you like to come with me and have a dish of the best ice cream in Rome? he asked Stateley as they exited into the street.

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— Yes, I would.

— Fine. This is my car here.

The car was a jeep, with a heavy canvas top. Wild drove it with enormous recklessness through the narrow sidewalkless Roman streets, at that hour filled with people as relaxed as though they were unaware of the existence of automobiles. Stateley sat tense, one hand on the edge of the seat, but he did not say anything to indicate that he was worried. The driver had the clear aim of coming as near to an accident as possible without having one, and while he did this he cursed the pedestrians loudly, denouncing them on technical points, for crossing against a traffic light or walking outside the pedestrian lanes.

— Why don't you stay in the lanes, you stupid sons-of-bitches, he shouted between clenched teeth at a crowd, and then as he swerved around a woman standing obliviously in the middle of the street, missing her by inches and frightening her half out of her wits, he shouted in abrupt outlet of his nervousness:

— Waaaaaaa!

He parked the jeep with the same abruptness, but against a wall where there was no one to run over, got out, and without looking back at Stateley strode across the street into a cafe.

— What would you like? he asked cheerfully when Stateley caught up with him.

— I don't know. What's good?

— Would you like a special cassata they have here?

— Sure. Anything. You know what's good.

— I only know what I like, not what's good, Wild said, and turning to the waiter added: Two cassate.

The cassate were frozen dishes of ice cream and cake and orange-flavored liqueur topped with whipped cream and a tall telephone pole-shaped cone of pastry. When he and Stateley had finished eating them, Wild said:

— Come on and I'll take you to the place where they serve the best coffee in Rome.

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He led the way outside to the jeep, and almost before Stateley was inside he drove away from the curb like a shot, slammed on the brakes, made a sudden turn, and was twisting through the streets again.

— Do you like Rome? he asked darting his eyes from the road for a moment and looking into Stateley's face.

— Immensely.

— The Romans are the most impossible people in the world, Wild announced. But better than the rest of the Italians.

In surprise Stately asked Wild if he did not like Rome.

— Why do you think I live here? Wild replied. I wouldn't live in any other city in the world. The people are an impossible bunch of stupid bastards, but they triumph over it. The more you live here the more you realize that Paris and New York are hick towns. But you can never merely *like* the Romans. You have to outmanoeuver them. They're like the rest of the Italians in that, only more so. But they have an infinite adaptability. You can live as rich a life with them as you like. And they won't allow you to live a mean life.

He had parked again, at the curb across from a small cafe on the edge of a garden, and was on his way across the street without waiting for Stateley to answer. Stateley climbed out of the jeep and followed. He was bewildered by Wild, but not offended. He did not mind going out of his way to allow for other people's eccentricities; he knew what he wanted to do and the more agreeable terms he stayed on with everyone in Rome the less complications would interfere to distract him from doing it.

Wild again ordered and paid, and when the waiter put the first cup of coffee on the counter he picked it up and handed it to Stateley.

— Did you ever taste better coffee than that? he demanded staring at Stateley and waiting for him to answer.

— No, Stateley said, taking the cup from his lips to speak.

— No, and you won't.

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Stateley followed Wild out.

On the sidewalk in front of the cafe a young woman smiled at them. Wild asked:

— Are you interested?

— I don't think so.

— Be sure. She's quite pretty.

— I'm sure.

They were at the side of the jeep. Wild smiled.

— Well, he asked, where do you want to go now?

— I don't know.

— What do you want to do?

— Anything. Whatever you like.

— Well, get in and I'll show you Rome.

They sped along a wide neon-lined street until they reached the river. In the middle of the bridge they passed a boy.

— Look at that! Wild cried.

Stateley looked, but could see no more than that they had passed someone. At the end of the bridge Wild swung the jeep around and sped back in the direction from which they had come. The boy was looking back at the jeep as they approached him.

— Ciao, Wild called to the boy as the jeep drew to a halt beside him.

— Good evening, the boy said smiling down at them.

— A real beauty, Wild announced. Do you want to talk to him?

— I don't know, Stateley said bewildered by the rapidity of the whole occurrence.

— Where are you going? Wild asked the boy.

— Home.

— Well, do you want me to ask him to get in? Wild insisted.

— It's up to you.

— I'm not interested, Wild protested. He isn't my type. Say yes or no.

— No, I guess, Stateley said.

Wild stepped on the gas and the jeep shot forward.

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— Ciao, he called to the vanished boy.

At the end of the bridge he swung the jeep around and recrossed the bridge in the direction in which they originally had started. On the other side of the river he turned along the Tiber, saying:

— We'll try the river. Sometimes it's very interesting at night.

—Who was that boy? Stateley asked.

— I don't know. Just a Trastevere boy on his way home.

— Is he somebody who hangs out on the Via Veneto to be picked up?

— Him? Certainly not. Only the most commercial boys hang out there.

— But would he really have come with us if you had asked him?

— Certainly.

— But why? Stateley asked, an unpleasant idea crossing his mind. For money?

— It's always a good idea to give them money, Wild said. Five hundred lire. No, he'd have come because he's interested. They're all interested here. In everything. It's only in an immature country like America that people are afraid to be interested in any but a few things. Here everybody's interested in everything. If he got five hundred lire tonight he could take his fiancée to the movies tomorrow or go to a whorehouse. Life's where you find it here. This isn't America.

— But it seems crude to shout that way at somebody you've never seen before, Stateley ventured righteously.

Wild gave him a short challenging look.

— Why? What would you rather do, creep around him and roll your eyes at him without speaking? That's what's crude. This is straightforward and direct. Pleasant for everybody, easy for everybody, and clear to everybody from the beginning. Am I right?

— Yes, I guess so, Stateley said. But I haven't been in

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Italy long enough to get used to the way the Americans treat the people here.

— The river's dead tonight, Wild answered. We'll try the Villa Borghese.

He cut through the maze of streets, still driving fast but no longer having to dodge pedestrians. Within the last hour the streets had become almost deserted.

— If you stay here you'll have to get used to it, he continued. The cruel thing here is to be sentimental about the Italians and about treating them as equals. They aren't equals. They have a civilization and a way of life infinitely older and richer and more sophisticated than ours. To treat them as sentimental equals is stupidity. Treat them as what they are. The American who thinks that the Italians are something so low that it would be an insult to acknowledge their real character disgusts me. That's sheer laziness and nambypambyness. The Italians won't like you for it. They aren't dumb. They know fools when they see them.

The jeep was in the Villa Borghese then, moving slowly past the people ambling in the shadows of the trees at the side of the lighted drive or sitting on the benches beyond the walk. Wild slowed the jeep almost to a stop by a boy who was walking along the curb, but after a second drove faster past him.

— Too old, he said. When I first came to this country during the war I wondered what people could be thinking of when they talked about making love to kids of fourteen or fifteen. But after a while you come to know. They're never so beautiful again as then, everything round and full, eyes and bodies visibly ready for love. After a while you get to know that the sin is not in making love to them but in being here and not making love to them. Here the difference between men and women isn't as important as the difference between the young and the old. When you come to know the people and talk to them you'll understand that. The boys will tell you how, when they reach thirteen or fourteen, the women in their villages if they're from the country, or from their

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neighborhoods if they're Roman, start courting them. The women whistle as they walk under the boys' windows and then walk out into the country and wait. Or they call to them from the doorways of their own houses. And when the boys are a little older they get engaged to some nice younger girl. But they know by then that love is where you find it. And when you're in Rome you'd better know what the Romans know, too, or you'll regret it.

Having circled the garden and come back to where he had entered, Wild swung the jeep around and started down the same drive again.

Stateley said nothing for a while. Beneath one of the street lamps they passed a policeman, his face the color of Benito's beneath his olive green cap, above his olive green uniform with red and gold insignia, and he stood with the same indolent grace, as though his body could never be at an angle to the earth, even if he were squatting in the street, or sleeping on a wall, or standing slouched against a post; all his roundness, like the globe itself, completed him into a distinct sphere; he looked as though he might fall and bounce like a cat, separate from gravity in his very nearness to it. Stateley wanted to say something like that to Wild, but he was too embarrassed by what Wild had been saying. He was almost frightened, and he merely observed:

— That policeman was very beautiful.

Wild slowed the jeep.

— Why, he was practically an old man! Do you want to stop for him?

— No, no, Stateley said quickly. You wouldn't pick up a policeman, would you?

— I wouldn't, Wild said. But you can if you want to.

— I meant that you'd get in trouble if you tried to, wouldn't you?

— No. You have to be sensible about it, but that's easy enough. They're all friendly. Do you want to circle around again and stop for him?

— No, Stateley answered, wishing that he had not said

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anything. I only meant that the people here all have such an extraordinary beauty.

Having turned in a different direction, and driving down, down, down, out of the garden toward the river, Wild took up Stateley's words definitively, with a soft expansive tone as though he were addressing the cool night air itself, the quiet and confection of the dark riverside onto which they turned, the leafshadowed line of lightglobes, a line of moons against the carbonpaper sky.

— Extraordinary beauty? Yes. But in a world where beauty is no premium. Where they have learned to accept that beauty does not last and to make the most of it while it's here. A world where beauty uses its power in the light of this knowledge. A sad world. But never a lonely or a hopeless world. A world sad with the knowledge that time conquers, which is the only knowledge that conquers time. And sweet with that sadness.

The change in Wild's tone to tenderness, just when his preemption was beginning to annoy Stateley, annoyed Stateley even more. He suddenly decided that he disliked the man and that the whole atmosphere of the evening was diabolical.

— You'll have to tell me when you want to stop for someone, Wild said. I don't know what you like. Old, young, skinny, fat. Man, woman, boy, girl. But whatever it is, it's in Rome. It's a little late, now, however. After ten they all go home to eat. We'll just drive along the river once again.

— I think I'd better go back to the hotel, Stateley said. I promised to meet someone there at eleven.

— Fine. Or we could drive out to the street of the twenty-five lire whores. There are some wonderful old hags out there sitting on the wall by the Circo Massimo taking them right over into the bushes one after another and sometimes there are some beautiful young things there waiting. Want to try?

— Perhaps another time. I'd better go back to the hotel now.

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— All right. Another time. I'm sorry we didn't do better tonight. It's rather cold, though. Windy, and these delicate Italians can't stand a little breeze of fresh air.

The jeep swung around a corner and suddenly the hotel was in front of them. Stateley climbed out.

— Goodnight, he said.

— Ciao! Wild called as the jeep sped away.

His decision to leave Rome did not come suddenly, but the seed of it was planted that day. In the week which followed, restlessness, tiredness, and energy nurtured it. Rome became at once too large and too small. Stateley awoke early, but he could not stay in his room and try to work, and his restlessness continued for a week. Since he could not compose in the hotel, he decided that he would find a studio and rent a piano, and each morning he started out early. As soon as he was in the streets he was tired, and he was unable to sit in any piazza for an hour and rest. Always, he was restless with the idea that Wild or someone from the hotel would pass and misinterpret his presence, or that there was somewhere else he should go, something else he should do. He was filled with expectation yet his expectation inevitably ended, not in fulfillment, but in a sudden awe of exhaustion which swept before it not only the possibility of fulfillment but the desire. Since his evening with Wild he disliked speaking to any of the natives of Rome. Melodramatically, he told himself that the city was a beautiful body eaten away by a loathsome disease. He wanted nothing more to do with it. And above all he did not want to encounter Benito again. Yet he had a morbid curiosity to learn more details of the life which shocked him and to stimulate his dislike. He went out of his way to encounter the people he knew at the restaurant. He walked great distances to return to the restaurant from far corners of the city, arriving sometimes when the others were almost finished with their meal. And after he had left the restaurant he walked further, going over and over in his mind his reaction to the others' attitudes and actions. He told himself that the whole situation was too like a game for him to take it seriously, that

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it was an isolated phenomenon with no relation to life; yet it was the everyday life of Rome, and it was the only life which he saw about him every day. He told himself that in comparison with this life the moral problems in the *The Marble Faun* were oversimplified; then, in counterpoint to this attitude, by the side of the actions in Hawthorne's book the life of the people he knew became absurdly petty. He would feel smug when his thoughts reached this point; but then he would suspect that his smugness concealed a doubt, and he would feel guilty again. Promiscuity, although he did not approve of it, he accepted among his friends at home. Here, the Italians needed money and he had felt pleased with himself for having given a present of money to Benito. So it could not be just the promiscuity or just the money which upset him. It was the combination. Somehow the fact that money was substituted for consideration confused the difference between real and conventional value, on which his attitude toward life was based, and destroyed the gulf between them. And when his thoughts reached *this* point he always found that he had reached physical exhaustion. He returned to his room at the hotel with his face hot as though he were sitting close to a blazing fire. So tired that he was unable to undress, he pulled off his shoes, which were continually brown with dust as though he had been walking in them for days without dusting them, although each evening he put them outside his door and each morning he took them in, black and glossy and smelling of polish, and he lay across his bed until he recovered enough energy to stand up and remove his clothes. Then he could relax a little. In his room the desire to be somewhere else was simple and natural, like his desire to be in New York when he was in New Jersey. But as soon as morning came again and he had eaten breakfast and was outside beneath the sky in which not a single cloud flawed the perfect azure, as soon as he was embarrassed by the gift of cupolaed spires and baroque doorways, by the brightness of the woolens and cottons so rainbow pure that he could no longer tell if it were brilliance of the sun or of the

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dyes which dumbfounded his eyes, and so sensual that he no longer knew if it was the people themselves or their clothes which seemed provocative, immediately the infinite possibilities of this cornucopia of the mundane exhausted and aroused him. After deciding to stop in a cafe and drink a coffee in order to sit down and rest, he drank a coffee standing at the counter and continued walking.

At the end of the week there came several days of rain. Between brief showers, the sky was hung with lines and lines of blue and white clouds hung out like blue and white wash, still wet, in the brilliant sunshine. But Stateley was not able to rest calmly under awnings until the showers were over. Running through a downpour to a further destination one afternoon, he was drenched. He caught a cold. He blamed the cold on the moral climate around him rather than on the rain, but that did not make the cold less miserable. For a whole day he was forced to sit in his room drinking lemon juice and hot water. Too upset to work or read, he sat in bed turning the pages of his copy of *The Marble Faun*. Between the pages where he had put it to press, he came across the three leaf clover from Hilda's tower. He closed the book with his mind made up.

He had seen as much of Rome as he needed to see and now it was only a hindrance to his work. He would leave Rome and go further south. He would go somewhere where commercialism had not eaten so far into life. He would go, as it now seemed that he had always wanted to, to Sicily.

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DONALD HALL

METHOD IN POETIC COMPOSITION

(with special attention to the techniques of Richard Eberhart and Richard Wilbur)

HISTORICALLY, poets have generally adopted one of two main "poses," or manners of considering their own *metier*. One has been the prophet, or *vates*, the divine madman who scrawls out his gifts from the gods in a state of inspiration and frenzy. The *vates* corresponds to the popular conception of the poet as long-haired eccentric. Contemporary critical opinion, on the other hand, often seems to disbelieve in the *vates*, and to expect all poets to conform to the other traditional category, that of the craftsman, the careful "maker."

The categories become mixed in individual poets. Blake posed as a prophet, and said that poems were dictated to him by voices, but some manuscripts which have survived show extensive and painstaking revision; and even between printed editions of his work, Blake occasionally revised. The craftsman Coleridge wrote out *Kubla Kahn* in a state of near-dream. Yet, despite these and other exceptions, two general lines can be distinguished; and the attitude toward composition has some relation to the kind, if not the quality of the poems written.

Pasternak has said that the pose comes before the poetry. Whatever order of events is considered most accurate, what is most significant is not the order of the facts but the relationship itself. It is the assumption of the role which provides the speaker with the manner of speech. As in life we make a series of formal choices in conversation, which can be compared to a sculptor blocking out the main shape of his statue,

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so in art our formal choices are much more fine, and demand or engender a corresponding high formality. There is no insincerity involved—a useless term in literary criticism—but an assumption of personality which is no less real because it is assumed.

Richard Eberhart and Richard Wilbur make a useful contrast in their habits of composition. They are both good poets, and both thoroughly inside the movement of modern poetry—yet their methods are so distinctly opposed as to provide a text by contrast. Eberhart is the contemporary *vates*. To him, it seems that poetry is spontaneous, and the expression of a divine madness. Critical fashion, which once would not tolerate Trollope because he wrote according to schedule, today distrusts the existence of the inspired work. Poe's description of his method in writing "The Raven"—an orderly process in which he chose length, form, and even characteristic sounds before subject matter—shocked his contemporaries, but does not appear fantastic today. Yet it is certain that Eberhart's description of his own poetic activity is thoroughly honest. We must learn to accept the fact of inspiration. Eberhart has written, "In the rigors of composition it seems to me that the poet's mind is a filament, informed with the irrational vitality of energy as it was discovered in our time in quantum mechanics. The quanta may shoot off any way. (You breathe in maybe God)... This leads on not to automatic writing, but to some mysterious power latent within him which illuminates his being so that his perceptions are more than ordinarily available for use, and that in such moments he has the ability to establish feelings, ideas and perceptions which are communicable in potential degree and with some pleasure."

Since it is not the idea of a poem which presents itself to Eberhart, but a state of mind in which he can write poetry, his writing is sporadic and intense. He cannot write at will. Sometimes months elapse between two sessions of writing, but when the "manic state"—as he has called it—occurs, Eberhart may write as many as ten poems right after each other, very nearly as quickly as he can put pen to paper. It is, he

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says, "a method of exhausting the psyche, a trance-like state, dominated by sensibility." Therefore in Eberhart's work there is little revision; words are changed only occasionally, and never more than one whole line in a poem.

The ten poems written at a sitting are grossly uneven in quality—another of the mysteries. For most of his writing life, Eberhart has published only twenty percent of the poems he has written. His desk is stuffed with unpublished poems. More recently, he has published half of his poems, but he does not know whether to attribute this to an increasing sureness of technique, aided by revision, or to literary prominence. He doubts the value of poems which editors reject, but follows the advice Empson gave him years ago, to publish everything he could, because it is impossible to know what a future age may find in a poem the present age dislikes.

Richard Wilbur, on the other hand, publishes every poem he finishes, and finishes far fewer than Eberhart. The actual writing of a poem may take four hours and it may take two years, but it tends to be accomplished in an intense burst of effort in one or two days. Before the writing begins, Wilbur often carries the idea of the poem in his head for some time; he says he feels a certain warm self-indulgence at such times: he has a poem, but he isn't going to share it with anybody. He may very well make notes for it, groups of words which suggest to him the movement the poem will follow, and which may or may not appear in the poem. The notes are not a thorough prose draft of the poem (Yeats, Ben Johnson, Horace and Virgil have used such drafts) but merely suggestive fragments; Wilbur would note "Helen" rather than "epitome of earthly beauty." In the notes for his poem, "The Beacon," Wilbur used a diagram to work out the conceit which is the movement of the poem. The luxurious cherishing of the poem, and the note-taking stage, last varying lengths of time. Then comes the writing.

Wilbur cannot describe the experience of writing in terms which resemble Eberhart's. It is a condition of intense self-absorption, rather than a "manic state." It is an effort, of the intensest variety, to force the poem into a whole. Very

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often Wilbur does not know, when he begins a poem, where it will end. He has one image, or set of images, which appeals to him; the concentration is an effort to find the meaning behind the image, and the intensity must produce a result honest in the terms of the poem in itself, or the poem will be bad. One of the best poems in Wilbur's most recent book, *Ceremony*, is an example: when he began "A World Without Objects is a Sensible Emptiness," the "tall camels of the spirit" in the first line were simply an image of asceticism. The poem halted, midway in the third stanza, for several months, until Wilbur realized the culmination of the poem in imagery of Bethlehem. The finished poem convinces us of its perfect integrity. "The Pardon," also from *Ceremony*, had its origin in a dream; writing the poem was the process of understanding the dream.

Wilbur writes—much as Johnson in the *Lives of the Poets* describes the method of Thomas Grey—slowly, but without cancelling. Once he has found the track of a poem, Wilbur seldom makes changes, but each line is thoroughly worked out in his head before it is committed to paper. He seems to have a rapid faculty of self-criticism, and he cannot bear to write down a bad line in order to get on to the next. Other poets in the "craftsman" tradition have different methods. Some, like Dylan Thomas, may write out thirty bad versions of a line before hitting on one which pleases them, but will not proceed further until they are satisfied with the current line. Still other poets revise draft by draft, setting down lines they know to be bad, but wishing to move on, and planning to return and polish later. These latter are the poets who make fifty or a hundred drafts of a poem. Poets like Wilbur or Thomas may make only one draft, but take much time in doing it. Robert Frost, another poet of the "craftsman" group, holds a poem in his memory, revising it and finishing it before he ever writes it out.

When the whole of a poem is on paper, Wilbur seldom finds it necessary to change more than a word or two, and there are few false starts. One occurred in the composition of his excellent poem "Beasts," which appeared in *Botteghe Oscure IX*,

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and of which I have seen the worksheets. The first evidence of "Beasts" is a series of notes on the sheet of paper containing the diagram of "The Beacon." Another sheet contains a sketch of the first stanza which is almost totally rejected in the finished poem. The rejected stanza is, interestingly, in the same metre as the published version. A further sheet contains the whole poem very nearly as it appears; alternate words and phrases are listed in the margin, and make it an interesting work sheet. Wilbur has also jotted down phrases which obviously occurred to him during composition, but were not meant for inclusion in the poem; one penciled note is, "happy as a vampire at a blood bank."

Eberhart's worksheets are, as one would expect them, remarkably clean. Even in the hurry of composition, Eberhart seems only rarely to cross out one word and substitute another. One of the worksheets of "The Skier and the Mountain," twenty-one lines, is abnormal in having five words changed during composition, and a last line of which there are variant versions. The handwriting is nearly illegible with haste. Even here, almost every word has come into print exactly as it was hurried down on paper.

"The Groundhog," Eberhart's most celebrated poem—included by almost every anthologist of contemporary poetry—seems to have been a highly spontaneous creation. Eberhart cannot remember writing it, and finds no first draft, only a version which, by the steadiness of the handwriting, seems to be a fair copy. The original was written in the thirties, several years after the incident described in the poem; all that Eberhart remembers is that it was written on the same occasion as "In a Hard Intellectual Light," another of his best poems.

While Wilbur found an image in a dream, which he later by an effort of concentration worked into a poem, Eberhart has, like several other poets, written a poem in what is very nearly a state of dreaming. He tells of one occasion: "Two years ago I woke up in the middle of the night with a swirl of words going about in my head... I stumbled out in the darkness to my near-by study... I found a pencil but could not find paper... Suddenly I found a 3 × 5 white pad. Immed-

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iately I began, in calmness and control and dominated by a certain mood which pervaded all the images, to draw off six short lines on a page. The size of the 3 × 5 sheets of paper dictated the form of the poem. As I turned over page after page the poem became separate stanzas of six lines each. I wrote seventeen stanzas, before the mood was spent.

"If there is anything which I am certain of it is that this poem, "The Herb Basket," has its form not from preconception but by the arbitrary caprice of the fortuitous appearance of the 3 × 5 pad of paper in the middle of the night."

Another quotation from each of the poets will put into relief their essential contrast. Both are from John Ciardi's anthology, *Mid-Century American Poets*. Eberhart writes, under the heading On Rhythm and Metre: "Rhythm is dictated to the poet by his inner being. It reflects his peculiarity. It is like something symbolically grasped out of the sky while walking; it comes in a quick realization, inevitably (but subject to change), a gift, provoking a force of words. Meter is the control of innate rhythms." And Wilbur ends his essay in the same volume: "There are other... reasons for preferring strictness of form: the fact, for example, that subtle variation is unrecognizable without the pre-existence of a norm; or the fact that form, in slowing and complicating the writing-process, calls out the poet's full talents, and thereby insures a greater care and cleverness in the choice and disposition of words. In general, I would say that limitation makes for power: the strength of the genie comes of his being confined in a bottle." That Wilbur could agree with Eberhart's words, and Eberhart with Wilbur's, is of course true, but the differences in the two statements are significant. Power for Wilbur arises paradoxically from control; for Eberhart, everything is the outflowing of a tremendous force in complete freedom though of course it once found its genie in a 3 × 5 pad of paper. It is true that from all this no lesson can be learned which can tell us anything about the value of a poem, but still the study of worksheets seems to gain in popularity. The interest in poets' habits of composition is not new: Samuel Johnson's fascination with the Trinity College manuscripts of

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Milton is as intense as Charles Lamb's romantic abhorrence of trespassing on the same "workshop of a great artist." What is new is the psychological investigation, the search for a clue to the origin of creative activity. Neither the old nor the new interest is specifically literary: the psychologist's search is psychological, and the critic's an outgrowth of his preoccupation with literary excellence. If one is greatly moved by "Lycidas," it is curiosity and not morbid fascination which informs a study of the manuscripts. Though some new critics consider such interest an heretical fallacy, I cannot think that it is truly reprehensible. A good shoemaker may be a storehouse of useless information about his craft, but it is only more evidence of his absorption in his subject, and not a revelation of frivolity.

We can learn only that method has no consistent relation to quality, and that the literary observer must be prepared to find enormous range within method. Wilbur's poems are not dull and pedestrian, as romantic critics might think his method implied; and Eberhart's are not formless and chaotic, as a newer generation of critics might expect. Yet it is possible to acknowledge, at least with the aid of hindsight, that the adopted personality is expressed both in the method of the poet, and characteristic tone and content of his poems. It is fair to say, still with no evaluation implied, that Wilbur's poems move carefully and elegantly, step by calculated step, to a sure conclusion; Eberhart's are like fireworks left in the rain; many of them have their powder wet, and only fizzle, but when one goes off there is a real explosion.

Note: Most of the information, and many of the quotations, in this article were obtained in interviews with Eberhart and Wilbur. Some material has been quoted from *Mid-Century American Poets*, edited by John Ciardi, Twayne, 1950, and from "Poetry as a Creative Principle," an address delivered by Richard Eberhart at Wheaton College in 1952.

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EPITHALAMIUM

(for David Wright and Phillipa Reid)

Sweat, wicked kissers, in your stark
Hate of the whitewashed day;
By the queen-swarm of a breast
Where lolls a honeycombing hand
No peeping constellations may
Eavesdrop upon you as you clip
Each other in old Adam's nest,
And in an evening silvered cup
Love' upspringing sunrise catch
Till the winged bloodhorses of sex
Dead heat, and meet their match.

No, never lift those heavy eyes
(Like mirrors opposite they view
Two whole advancing worlds of two)
For that inspector with a sword
Outside your bedroom keeping guard
Who mistakes for a sadder place
The sacred bed and garden of
Your permissible embrace.

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Across the globe from Africa
To New Zealand you have bent
The rainbow of your sacrament
And promise of a Milky Way,—
Under whose nuptial arch so many
—Folk and flower, fish and beast—
Would shelter, if they only could,
From afflictions not understood,
Till half the world curled up like any
Babe against your threefold breast.

And yet your bed is full enough
When empty of all things except
Two who erect their house of love
On the dark spot where Adam wept.
But let no poison of the veins
Shake here a Pharaoh skeleton—
These two in one another's chains
Labouring under Helicon
Prove that who looses also gains
The love that takes a world of pains.

—George Barker

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Short Stories

EVAN S. CONNELL JR. has been twice honored by inclusion in the O. Henry Awards Prize Story volumes. His short stories have appeared in *Flair*, *Tomorrow*, and *New World Writing*. *Cocoa Party* is a chapter from Mr. Connell's first novel, which he is now completing in Paris on a Eugene Saxton Fellowship.

PATI HILL'S *In The House Where They Were Born* appeared in the June issue of THE PARIS REVIEW. She has also contributed stories to *Mademoiselle*, *Town and Country*, and *Seventeen*. *Linda* is an excerpt from a novel on which she is now at work in Paris—*The Nine Mile Circle*.

SUE KAUFMAN, a native New Yorker, graduated from Vassar in 1947. Her short stories have appeared in *The Saturday Evening Post*, *McCalls*, and *Mademoiselle*.

DONALD WINDHAM has recently completed a play, *The Starless Air*. He was the co-author with Tennessee Williams of a play entitled *You Touched Me*, which was performed in New York in 1945. Mr. Windham's best-known work, his novel *The Dog Star*, was published by Doubleday.

Interview

SIMON RAVEN and MARTIN SHUTTLEWORTH both attended King's College, Cambridge. Mr. Shuttleworth is following a literary career in London; Mr. Raven is at present in the British Army. Both have contributed a number of articles to leading English periodicals.

Note on Marjorie Bowen: The Viper of Milan is one of about 100 novels, mostly romantic and historical, which have appeared under the name of Marjorie Bowen. This is only one of the pseudonyms of Gabrielle Margaret Long, a prolific English writer who died on December 23rd, 1952 after 64 busy years of mortal existence. She wrote more than 25 books under the name of George R. Preedy, several under the names of Robert Faye and John Winch, and it is now thought that she is responsible for books published under the signatures of Evelyn Winch, Edgar Winch and E. M. Winch. In 1939, under the name of Margaret Cambell, she published her autobiography, *The Debate Continues*. Her

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best works, highly regarded by discerning readers and critics, she published under the name of Joseph Shearing: a series of novels developing a single theme, that of the gently-reared young woman forced by circumstance to commit acts of violence in cold blood. Some of these were based in half-forgotten crimes of the 18th and 19th centuries, as for example *The Strange Case of Lucile Clery* (the Praslin murder), *The Spectral Bride* (the Madeleine Smith Case), and *Airing in a Closed Carriage* (the Maybrick case). From a literary viewpoint, the novel *The Golden Violet*, belonging to the Joseph Shearing group, is universally regarded as Mrs. Long's finest achievement.

Poetry

GEORGE BARKER's new book of poems, *Legends of Beasts and Gods*, from which *Epithalamium* has been taken, will be published this fall by Faber. Mr. Barker lives in a woodcutter's cottage in Hazlemere, Surrey.

THOM GUNN, who at 23 graduated from Cambridge University this spring, has broadcast on the BBC and has had poems published in a number of English literary magazines.

ROBERT LAYZER's *Brownstone* won him the Lloyd Garrison Prize for Poetry last spring at Harvard University. He is to enter the Harvard Medical School this fall.

CHRISTOPHER LOGUE is a young English poet writing in Paris. His verse is to appear in a future *Discovery* and a collection of his poems entitled *Watch and Quadrant* is to be published this fall by Collection Merlin.

F. GEORGE STEINER is on temporary leave from the staff of *The Economist* to teach at Williams College. Two of his poems appeared in the first number of THE PARIS REVIEW.

Commentary

DONALD HALL recently attended Oxford University where he was editor of *New Poems*. His verse has appeared in *The Hudson Review*, *World Review*, and *New Soundings*.

Omission: The Mauriac Interview in the last issue was translated by J. P. C. Train.

Le Gérant et la Directrice : COLETTE DUHAMEL

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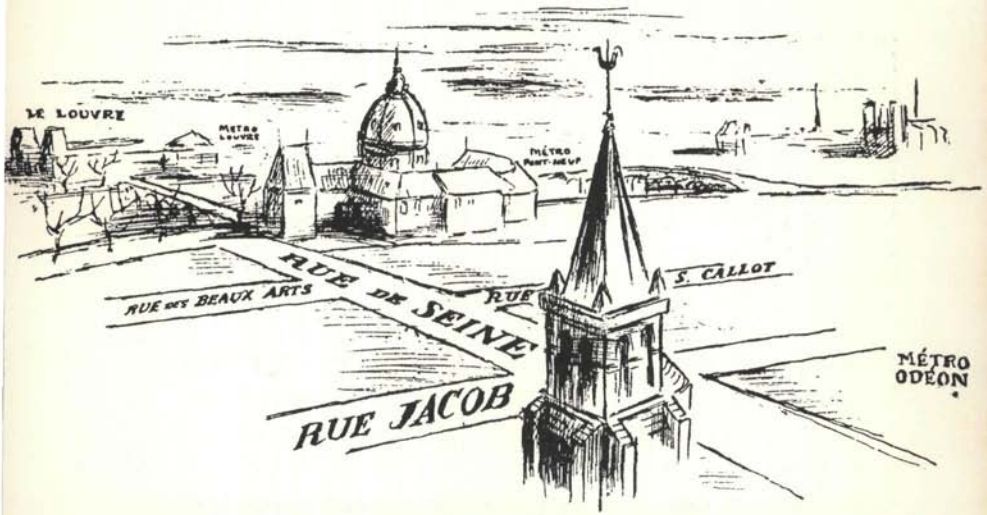

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